

The Aesthetic Philosophy of the Quotidian and the Cultivation of Perception

Almost all that is ever seen as beautiful is seen in the course of an ordinary day.

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大道至简，大美在常。

*The great Way is utterly simple;
the great beauty dwells in the ordinary.*

一期一会。

One time, one meeting.

— the way of tea

致她——

For her—

那个属于森林的女孩，
the girl who belongs to the forest,
她教我看见平常日子裡的光。
who taught me to see the light in ordinary days.

致我最爱的人。 To the one I love most.

Abstract

This paper develops an aesthetics of the everyday and, on its basis, a theory of aesthetic education. Its guiding claim is that everyday aesthetic perception, small in amplitude and prone to go dead through habituation, is generated rather than given, coming to be in the relation between a perceiver and what is perceived and, in the cases that matter most, between two perceivers turned together toward a shared world. From this it draws its central proposal, *generative relational aesthetic education*, as one thesis with four faces: that beauty is generated within a relational structure; that an education in beauty must therefore cultivate the relation and not only the individual, which marks it off from the individualist tradition from Schiller onward; that the relational and the individual stand in a spiral dialectic in which neither is prior; and that aesthetic generation carries an ethical valence at its root, so that beauty and ethics share a single source rather than being joined by a later moral rule.

The argument proceeds in three spines, of generation, of the body, and of justice, arguing across phenomenology, cognitive science, psychoanalysis, and the political economy of the senses that perception constructs a world under a prior frame; giving this its empirical ground in the neuroscience of perceptual plasticity; and showing, through the distribution of the sensible, that the uneven distribution of perceptual capacity is a neglected injustice. On this ground the paper offers, as a preliminary and openly revisable contribution, four models of everyday aesthetic practice, each with its theoretical descent made explicit: a basic generative cycle; a reflective variant beginning in silence, where reception suspends private judgement; the leaving of emptiness, a field in which contingency may generate of itself; and an iterative symbolic refinement modelled on evolution without a fitness function. The paper closes not in synthesis but in directed fissures, the first pointing toward the emergence of culture in intimate relation.

Keywords: everyday aesthetics; the cultivation of perception; generative relational ontology; perceptual plasticity; the distribution of the sensible.

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1. Introduction

Most of what is ever perceived as beautiful is perceived in the course of an ordinary day, and almost none of it is perceived in a museum. A person wakes to a particular quality of light on a wall, hears rain begin against the glass, tastes the first mouthful of something warm, watches someone they love cross a room. Such perceptions are small in amplitude, high in frequency, and gone almost before they are noticed, and philosophy has largely declined to treat them, having inherited a discipline of aesthetics built around the rare and framed object. A theory of beauty attending only to what hangs in galleries has thereby passed over the overwhelming majority of the sites at which the aesthetic actually occurs. This paper takes those sites for its subject. It concerns the aesthetics of the everyday, and it concerns what it would be to cultivate a capacity for that aesthetics, which is the old question of aesthetic education asked of the most ordinary material there is.

The everyday is not an easy subject, and it is not easy for the reason that recommends it. The same low amplitude and high frequency that make daily aesthetic life pervasive also make it the natural home of habituation: the light on the wall becomes *the light on the wall*, unseen by the second week. An account of everyday aesthetics that only celebrated the beauty available in ordinary things, without reckoning with the standing tendency of ordinary things to go dead to perception, would be sentimental and would deserve the neglect the subject has received. The everyday is the hardest case for any claim that the aesthetic is generated rather than given, because it is where the givenness of the world is most nearly total and where the work of generating perception must be done against the heaviest resistance. This paper accepts that difficulty as its proving ground: a theory of aesthetic generation that can be made to hold in the kitchen at seven in the morning has been tested where it is most likely to fail.

The proposal: generative relational aesthetic education

The central proposal can be put as one thesis with four faces, and the argument of the whole paper is the defence of these four together. The first is ontological, and it is the ground of the other three. Beauty is generated within a relational structure. It is not projected onto a neutral object by a sovereign subject, in the manner of aesthetic subjectivism, nor discovered as a property the object carried in itself waiting to be found, in the manner of aesthetic objectivism; it comes to be in the relation between a perceiver and what is perceived, and, in the cases this paper cares about most, in the relation between two perceivers turned together toward a shared world. A meal, a swept room, the light at a particular window: the beauty of these is not located in the thing, nor in either mind alone, but in the relational event of *our* perceiving and *our* doing thus, together. The everyday is where this is most visible, because everyday things are too plain to sustain the illusion that their beauty was simply sitting in them.

The second face follows from the first and gives the paper its title. If beauty is generated in a relational structure, then an education in beauty must cultivate the relation, and not only the individual within it. This marks the proposal off from the tradition of aesthetic education it

most respects. From Schiller's letters onward [41], that tradition has taken its unit to be the single person: it asks how one human being's sensibility, taste, or character might be brought toward completion, how the sensuous and the rational might be reconciled within a soul. The proposal here asks a different question, whose difference is the whole contribution: how a relation might be brought to go on generating the aesthetic, how two people might cultivate between them a shared capacity that neither carries alone. The cultivated thing is the relation's power to generate perception, and this is why the paper calls its subject generative relational aesthetic education.

The third face guards the second against a misreading it invites. To make the relation the unit of cultivation is not to dissolve the individual into it. The relational and the individual stand in a dialectic, and the dialectic is a spiral rather than a subordination. An individual's perceptual refinement, the trained discrimination this paper will trace through the neuroscience of expertise, is the condition on which relational aesthetic generation draws; and the shared perception generated in the relation returns to reshape the individual's own capacity, which enters the next round already altered. Neither pole is prior. The individual sinks into the relation and the relation returns to remake the individual, and the return does not arrive back at its origin. This spiral, which earlier papers of this series have tracked under the geometry of holonomy, is what keeps the relational from swallowing the individual, and the paper will insist on it wherever the temptation to a simpler collectivism appears.

The fourth face concerns the bearing of all this on ethics, and it is placed here, at the outset, because it is not an addition to the aesthetic argument but a consequence of it. Because beauty is generated in a relation, and because a relation may be of a kind that returns what it generates to both who stand in it or of a kind that draws one of them off as mere material for the other's experience, aesthetic generation carries an ethical valence at its root. A perception that consumes the other as a spectacle, the aestheticising gaze that turns a person into scenery, is a bad aesthetic generation in the exact structural sense this series has given to badness; a perception in which each party to the shared seeing is a beneficiary of it is a good one. Beauty and ethics are not joined here by adding a moral rule to an aesthetic fact. They share a single root in the structure of relational generation, and the theory of justice this series has been building enters the aesthetics of the everyday through that shared root rather than over a wall.

Contribution, and its measure

The contribution of this paper should be stated with its limits showing. It does not offer a completed system of relational aesthetic education, and it does not claim to have settled how such an education would proceed. What it offers is, first, the rethinking of aesthetic education along three axes on which that tradition has rarely been set: the relational system, in which the unit of cultivation is a relation rather than a person; the theory of justice, in which the uneven distribution of perceptual capacity is recognised as a form of injustice; and ethics, in which aesthetic generation is shown to carry its ethical valence at the root rather than by later addition. On the ground so prepared, the paper then proposes, as a preliminary and openly revisable offering, four models of everyday aesthetic practice, each with its theoretical

descent made explicit and none advanced as a closed prescription. That the models are four, and offered for testing and amendment rather than as a finished inventory, is not a modesty of manner but a fidelity to the subject: an aesthetic education that could be reduced to a fixed procedure would have contradicted, in its form, the generativity it means to cultivate.

Where the paper stands, and how it proceeds

The argument does not begin from nothing. It stands on ground this series has already laid: a relational ontology in which relations precede their terms; a theory of value in three registers, imaginary, symbolic, and real, whose real register alone carries endogenously good value; the distinction between the good and bad cycle, given a geometric body as the sign of a holonomy; the framework of generative justice developed in exchange with Eglash [15], in which every party to a generative process must be a beneficiary and none reduced to fuel; and the account of happiness, from an earlier paper of this series, as a quality of a dynamical process rather than a state to be reached. To these it joins resources from outside: the phenomenology of perception, the predictive-coding account of the perceiving brain, the psychoanalytic account of how desire organises the visual field, the political economy of the historically produced senses, the tradition of everyday aesthetics, and Rancière's account of the distribution of the sensible. The joining is deliberate and is governed by a method the paper states plainly, so that its breadth is not mistaken for eclecticism. The disciplines are arranged in three tiers. A small number bear the weight of the argument's spines. Several more enter as structural interventions, each doing a determinate piece of work at a determinate place. The rest sound as overtones, supplying an image or a formal correspondence without being asked to carry a claim. Where the paper reaches a formal register at all, it keeps the formalism in the serving position, translating results already established rather than deriving them here; and throughout, it declines to convert the cultivation of perception into a technique, on the methodological ground that a generativity made procedural is a generativity killed.

Three spines carry the paper, and each is named here with the disciplines that bear it. The first is the spine of *generation*: that aesthetic perception generates a world rather than registering one, a claim tested where it is hardest, in the everyday, and argued across phenomenology, cognitive science, and psychoanalysis. The second is the spine of *the body*: that perception is plastic, so that the cultivation of perception is a real training and not a metaphor, a claim given its empirical body by the neuroscience of perceptual learning. The third is the spine of *justice*: that the distribution of perceptual capacity is uneven in ways that constitute a neglected injustice, so that aesthetic education is answerable to the theory of justice, a claim argued through the political economy of perception and the distribution of the sensible. The paper is the working-out of these three spines toward the proposal they were raised to support, and it ends not in a synthesis but in a set of directed fissures, each marking a place where what has been said runs out and points beyond itself, the first of them toward the emergence of culture that a later paper must take up.

2. The Phenomenology and Diagnostics of the Everyday

Before a theory of everyday aesthetics can propose anything, it owes two things that are usually run together and are better kept apart: a description of how the everyday actually shows itself to perception, and a diagnosis of what has gone wrong with it and what a healthy relation to it would be. The first is phenomenological and withholds judgement; the second is diagnostic and does not. This section supplies both in that order, because the proposals of the later parts of the paper are answerable to a diagnosis, and a diagnosis that has not first looked carefully at the phenomenon it means to treat is a prejudice with clinical pretensions. What the description will show is an aesthetic life of low amplitude and high frequency, pervasive and endangered in the same breath. What the diagnosis will add is an account of the danger, of the ground on which the everyday nonetheless remains the decisive field, and of what it would be for the dynamics of a life and a relation to be well rather than ill within it.

2.1 The phenomenology of the everyday

The everyday shows itself, first, in a register beneath the threshold at which experience ordinarily announces itself as aesthetic. It does not arrive framed. The quality of morning light on a wall, the particular sound a familiar door makes, the warmth of the first cup held in both hands, the way a person one lives with sets down a book: these present themselves not as objects offered for contemplation but as the barely-noticed texture of being somewhere, doing something, with someone. Their amplitude is low. No single instance of everyday beauty makes the demand upon attention that a painting in a gallery is institutionally arranged to make; each could be, and mostly is, passed over without remark. Their frequency, correspondingly, is enormous. Where the encounter with art is rare and set apart, the everyday delivers its small aesthetic events continuously, through every waking hour, so that the total aesthetic weight of a life is carried far more by this constant low murmur than by the few occasions on which one stands deliberately before something made to be seen.

The everyday shows itself, second, as transient in a way that is constitutive rather than incidental. The light that is precisely this on the wall now will not be this again; even were the same people to gather tomorrow in the same room with the same things, the gathering would not be the same gathering, for the light would have moved, and the people would have altered, and something would have shifted that cannot be shifted back. The tradition of tea gave this its exact name. 一期一会, one time, one meeting: a phrase drawn from the practice of tea and crystallised by Ii Naosuke, marking each gathering as singular and unrepeatable, and doing so, as its commentators are careful to note, in a register that is relational before it is contemplative, concerned with the shared event between persons and not merely with the inner state of one [38]. The everyday is the standing home of this transience. Its beauty is very largely the beauty of what is passing, and this is not a melancholy attaching to the everyday from outside but a feature of how the everyday is given at all.

The everyday shows itself, third and most consequentially, under a constant tendency to recede from view. What is encountered continuously is precisely what perception learns to stop

registering. This is not a failure that befalls some perceivers and spares others; it is the ordinary working of a perceptual system that economises by ceasing to attend to what it has learned to predict. The phenomenological description must therefore include, as one of the everyday's own features, its liability to become invisible to the very perceiver it surrounds. It is here that description shades into diagnosis, for this liability is at once a fact about how the everyday appears and the opening through which its characteristic pathologies enter.

2.2 Three pathologies

The everyday fails perception in three linked ways, and naming them precisely matters, because the models proposed later are, among other things, answers to these three.

The first pathology is *habituation*. The continuous and the familiar are what perception ceases to see. Russian Formalism gave this its sharpest early statement: everyday life, Shklovsky wrote, produces automatisations, a condition in which perception goes mechanical, and habituation *devours* the objects of a life, its work and its clothing and its furniture and even, in his unsparing list, one's spouse [42]. The observation is exactly right and the paper takes it as the first term of its diagnosis. But it is worth marking at once where this paper will part from the remedy Formalism attached to the observation, since the divergence sets the whole direction of what follows. Shklovsky's cure was defamiliarisation: the work of art makes the familiar strange, interrupts the automatism, and restores the freshness of a perception that ordinary life had dulled. The cure locates the aesthetic power in a technique applied to the object, and it locates it, tellingly, in *art*, so that the everyday is redeemed only by being made, through artistic device, to stop being everyday. The path taken here is the contrary one. The remedy for habituation will not be to make the ordinary strange but to cultivate a relational capacity by which the ordinary is generated anew in its very ordinariness. One does not defeat the deadening of the light on the wall by rendering the light bizarre; one defeats it by the generative work of a perception, and above all a shared perception, that meets the light as this light, now, once. Shklovsky diagnosed the disease with precision and prescribed an escape from the everyday; this paper prescribes a deeper entry into it.

The second pathology is *numbing*, which is habituation's affective completion. Where habituation is the failure to perceive, numbing is the failure to be moved by what is perceived, the flattening of affective response until the small aesthetic events of the day register, if at all, without consequence. Numbing is the more dangerous because it can wear the costume of depth: a perceiver gone affectively flat may mistake the flatness for equanimity or maturity, and a theory of the everyday must be able to tell the deadening of response apart from any genuine composure. The mark of the difference is generative: composure remains open to being moved and simply holds the movement well, whereas numbing has closed the channel by which the everyday could move one at all.

The third pathology is *symbolic decoration*, and it is the subtlest, because it looks like the cure rather than the disease. Faced with an everyday gone dead, a life may reach for the symbol: it may photograph the meal, narrate the moment, arrange the ordinary into a legible sign of itself

to be displayed or archived. The gesture promises to rescue the everyday from invisibility by marking it as significant. What it frequently accomplishes instead is the substitution of the sign for the perception, so that one possesses the token of having-seen in place of the seeing. This third pathology cannot be properly analysed here, because its analysis requires the theory of the symbolic order and its two fates that §4 will supply; the symbol's intervention in perception is not in itself a pathology, and only a certain fate of that intervention is. It is entered here as the third term of the diagnosis and left, deliberately, as a debt to be paid when the resources to pay it are in hand.

2.3 The everyday as the field of contingency

Diagnosis so far has been negative, a naming of failures. It must now become positive, and it becomes positive by saying what the everyday is such that these are its failures. The everyday is the field of contingency. This is not a fresh coinage but the specific character taken, at the scale of daily life, by the category of the field that earlier papers of this series established, the conditional structure within which relational production occurs. At this scale the field's defining character is that what happens in it is not arranged in advance. The everyday is precisely the region of a life that is not staged, not brought to a ceremonial peak, not curated into the frame of art or ritual; and its contingency, far from being a deficiency it should overcome by aspiring to the condition of the framed and the arranged, is the very condition of its generativity. A field in which everything is arranged admits only execution: what is fully staged can be performed, and performed well or badly, but it cannot generate, because generation requires that something occur which was not laid down in advance. The everyday's refusal of arrangement is therefore not the absence of aesthetic order but the presence of the room in which aesthetic order can be generated rather than merely enacted. One time, one meeting names this too: the singular and unrepeatable gathering is aesthetically decisive exactly because its precise configuration was contingent, never to recur, and so is a site of generation and not of reproduction. The pathologies of the previous section can now be understood in their unity. Each is a way in which the field of contingency is prevented from generating: habituation forecloses the contingent by predicting it away, numbing forecloses it by rendering it inconsequential, and decorative symbolisation forecloses it by settling it prematurely into a sign. The disease, in each of its three forms, is the arrest of a generativity that the contingency of the everyday was the standing opportunity for.

2.4 The dynamics of flourishing

The positive diagnosis can be completed by saying what it would be for a life and a relation to be well within the field of contingency, and here this paper draws on the account of happiness given earlier in the series and does not rebuild it. That account declined to treat happiness as a state to be reached and treated it instead as a quality of a dynamical process, a matter of how the coupled systems of a person and a relation move through time rather than of any terminus at which they might arrive [46]. Set in the present frame, the claim is that a healthy everyday is one in which the dynamics of an individual system and of a relational system develop, within

the field of contingency, in a direction that tends toward flourishing; and that the aesthetic life of the everyday is the sensuous medium in which this development is largely carried. The small continuous aesthetic events of the day are not ornaments upon a life whose real business lies elsewhere. They are among the principal couplings through which a person and a relation move each other, the medium in which the trajectory toward or away from flourishing is actually traced. This is why the arrest named by the three pathologies is not a merely aesthetic loss. When the field of contingency is prevented from generating, the medium through which the coupled dynamics of a life could tend toward flourishing is deadened, and the persons within it are left to move through a day that has stopped moving them. The stakes of an aesthetics of the everyday are, in the end, the stakes of this dynamics: to keep the ordinary generative is to keep open the medium in which two people, turned together toward their shared and unrepeatable days, may go on becoming well.

3. The Generation of Perception: Several Schools

The first spine of this paper holds that aesthetic perception generates a world rather than registering one. The claim is easy to assert and easy to reduce to a slogan, and it earns its place only if it can be shown to be the convergent finding of several traditions that arrived at it by different routes and in different vocabularies. This section assembles those traditions. It takes up in turn the phenomenology of perception, the predictive account of the perceiving brain, and the psychoanalytic account of how desire organises the visual field, and it shows that each, pressed on the question of what perceiving is, returns a version of the same answer: that perception is a construction of the world under a prior frame, and not the passive receipt of a world already made. It then meets the objection that would dissolve the whole enterprise, the denial that there is any distinctively aesthetic perception at all, and closes with the contemporary aesthetics of atmosphere, which locates the beautiful in exactly the relational between that this paper's ontology requires. The traditions are not merged here. Their convergence is the business of a later chapter (§8); the business of this one is to let each speak.

3.1 The phenomenological genealogy

Phenomenology reached the constructive character of perception first and states it most directly. For Merleau-Ponty, perception is not the reception of sense-data by a mind that then interprets them; it is the activity of a body already geared into a world, a body whose *schema* is a prior organisation of the perceptual field in advance of any particular thing perceived within it [30]. To perceive is to bring a bodily hold on the world to bear on what appears, so that what appears is always already articulated by the hold. There is no moment of pure reception prior to this articulation; the articulation is perception. Husserl, working the same ground from another side, gave the point its most exact name in the analyses of passive synthesis: before any active judgement, the perceptual field is already synthesised, already organised into unities and saliences and continuities by a passivity that has done its constructive work beneath and prior to the perceiver's notice [22]. What arrives at active attention has already been shaped. The everyday is the natural home of this passivity, since it is precisely in the unattended flow

of ordinary perception that passive synthesis does the greater part of its constructive labour, delivering a world already organised to a perceiver who takes that organisation for the world itself. Phenomenology's contribution to the first spine is therefore this: that the givenness of the perceived world is the achievement of a constructive activity, bodily and passive, which perception mistakes for a mere finding because the construction is not itself perceived.

3.2 The cognitive-scientific genealogy

The predictive account of the brain reaches the same conclusion through the study of the perceiving nervous system, and it is worth marking that it was not built to vindicate phenomenology and vindicates it anyway. On this account, perception is not the upward flow of sensory information into a receiving mind but a process in which the perceptual system continually generates predictions of its sensory input from a prior model of the world and corrects that model only by the residual error its predictions fail to cancel [18]. What is perceived is, in the first instance, what the system predicted; sensation enters as the correction of prediction rather than as the origin of perception. The frame under which the phenomenologists said perception constructs its object is, in this idiom, the generative model the brain brings to its input, and the constructive priority they described is here the literal direction of the dominant signal, which runs from model to world before it runs from world to model. The paper treats this correspondence as a substantive convergence and not a loose analogy, and it defers to the chapter on convergence the argument that the two are versions of one finding, and to the chapter on plasticity (§7) the neural body of the claim. What the first spine draws from cognitive science here is only the philosophical point: that the best current theory of the perceiving brain describes perception as the generation of a predicted world, corrected by sensation, rather than the assembly of a world out of sensation.

3.3 The psychoanalytic genealogy

Phenomenology and cognitive science establish that perception constructs under a prior frame; psychoanalysis asks what organises the frame, and answers with desire. Its contribution to the first spine is the one the other two cannot supply, an account of why the constructed world is constructed *thus*, salient here and blind there, and its answer is that the perceptual field is organised around desire and its object. Lacan's analysis of the visual field turns on the claim that vision is structured by a gaze that does not belong to the seeing subject, a gaze that functions as *objet a*, the object-cause of desire, around which the scopic field is arranged [24]. What a perceiver sees, and the point from which the seen is organised into a scene, is set by a desire that precedes and exceeds the perceiver's intention; the fantasy frame decides, beneath consciousness, what will show up as visible and what will remain unregistered. This is not a mysticism. It is the specification, at the level of desire, of the prior frame the other two traditions described formally: the generative model is not neutral, the bodily hold is not disinterested, and what organises their selectivity is, in the cases this paper cares about, the structure of a desire. The consequence for an aesthetics of the everyday is severe and clarifying. The beauty a perceiver finds in an ordinary scene is, in part, the beauty their desire was

structured to find; the light at the window is seen as it is seen because of what the seer wants, has lost, or circles. Perception of the beautiful is thus never the innocent registration of a beauty simply there, and any theory that treats it so has failed to ask who is doing the seeing and around what lack their seeing is organised. The paper will draw on this again when it comes to the reproduction of experience in silence (§12), where the psychoanalytic account of how experience is reworked after the fact becomes the theoretical body of one of its practical models.

3.4 The objection that there is no aesthetic perception

An objection now stands directly across the path, and it must be met before the argument proceeds, because if it holds there is no distinctively aesthetic perception for any education to cultivate. In his attack on the aesthetic attitude, Dickie argued that the supposed special mode of aesthetic attention is a myth: every alleged instance of a distanced or disinterested aesthetic attending turns out, on inspection, to be merely a case of attending or of failing to attend, with no special aesthetic manner of attention doing any work [13]. There is attention, and there is inattention, and there is no third thing that is aesthetic attention. The paper accepts the premise and denies the conclusion, and the way it does so shows what its own claim is not. It grants Dickie that there is no special psychological state of aesthetic attention laid over ordinary perception, no distinct faculty that switches on before a sunset and off before a spreadsheet. Generative relational aesthetic perception is not the exercise of such a faculty, and a theory that posited one would deserve Dickie's refutation. But the conclusion Dickie drew, that aesthetic perception has therefore no distinctive character and reduces to ordinary attention, follows only on a further assumption that this paper rejects: that perception itself is mere registration, so that once the special attitude is removed nothing constructive remains to distinguish one perceiving from another. That assumption is exactly what the three preceding genealogies deny. If ordinary perception is already a construction of the world under a frame, then the aesthetic is not a special attitude added to a neutral perceiving but a modality of the constructive activity that all perceiving already is, a manner in which the generative work of perception is drawn upon and intensified. Dickie was right that there is no aesthetic attitude sitting on top of perception. He was wrong to conclude that perception is therefore aesthetically undifferentiated, because he took perception to be a receiving where it is a making. Removing the myth of the aesthetic attitude does not leave a flat field of mere attention; it leaves the generativity of perception itself, within which the aesthetic is a way that generativity is exercised.

3.5 The generation of atmosphere

The contemporary aesthetics of atmosphere completes this section by naming, in aesthetic terms proper, the relational locus that the paper's ontology requires. Böhme's new aesthetics displaces the beautiful from both of its traditional addresses. Beauty is not a property the subject projects onto a neutral object, and it is not a property the object possesses in itself awaiting discovery; it is the atmosphere, the tuned in-between in which the qualities radiating

from things and the felt bodily state of the perceiver meet, and which is neither simply out there nor simply within [4]. Atmosphere is, in Böhme’s account, among the primary objects of perception rather than a vague addition to it, and it is generated in the between rather than found on either side. This is the aesthetic articulation of the ontological claim with which this paper began, and the paper takes Böhme as its ally in displacing beauty from subject and object alike into the relation between them. It must also mark where it goes further. Böhme’s between is the between of a single perceiver and an environment; the relation he theorises runs from one felt body to the qualities of a place. The relation this paper cares about most is the further one, between two perceivers turned together toward a shared world, in which the atmosphere generated is not one body’s attunement to a room but the shared generation of a perceived world by two who are also perceiving each other perceiving it. That extension is the work of the later parts of the paper. What this section has established is the ground it stands on: that across phenomenology, cognitive science, psychoanalysis, and the aesthetics of atmosphere, perception is found to generate its world under a prior frame, and beauty is found in the relational between rather than in subject or object alone. The frame’s plasticity, which makes an education of perception possible, is the subject of the spine to which the paper now turns.

4. The Symbolic Order and Its Two Fates

A debt was left unpaid in the diagnosis of the everyday. The third pathology, the decorative symbolisation that photographs the meal and narrates the moment, was named and then deliberately set aside, on the ground that it could not be analysed until the theory of the symbolic order was in hand (§2.2). This section pays that debt, and in paying it corrects a crudeness that the word *pathology* invited. It would be easy, and it would be wrong, to treat the symbolic intervention in perception as such a pollution, a fall from some purer immediate seeing. The symbolic order is the condition of shared perception, not its enemy; without symbolisation there is no perception two people could hold in common, only the silted-up interiority of a private imaginary. The symbol is therefore not the disease. What the diagnosis glimpsed as a pathology is one of two fates that the symbolic intervention may meet, and the work of this section is to distinguish the fate in which symbolisation generates from the fate in which it appropriates, and to give the criterion that tells them apart.

4.1 Symbolisation as the condition of shared perception

Perception, left in the register of the imaginary alone, is unshareable. The account of the three registers this series has used throughout locates in the imaginary the domain of the perceiver’s own images, vivid and immediate and idiosyncratic, and it is a standing feature of that register that its contents cannot as such be given to another; my image of this light is mine, and remains mine, until it is articulated in a system that another can enter. That system is the symbolic order, and its defining property, since Saussure, is that it signifies by difference rather than by resemblance: a term means through its place in a structure of contrasts, not through any likeness to what it marks [40]. It is precisely this differential structure that makes the symbolic

shareable where the imaginary is not, for a structure of differences can be occupied by more than one subject, whereas an image cannot be inhabited by anyone but the one who has it. When a perception is symbolised, it is lifted out of the private immediacy in which it could only be undergone and given a form in which it can be transmitted, revisited, and held in common. The intervention of the symbolic in perception is thus the very operation by which a perception becomes something that a relation, and not only a solitary perceiver, can have. To wish the symbol away in the name of an unmediated seeing is to wish away the possibility of a shared aesthetic life, which is the possibility this paper is about. The symbolic is the condition of the relational, and the relational is where, on this paper's central claim, beauty is generated. The question is therefore never whether perception should be symbolised. It is always what becomes of a perception when it is.

4.2 The generative fate

A symbolisation may generate. It does so when the form it gives a perception opens that perception to renewed generation rather than closing it into a token, when the symbol returns the perceiver, and the one to whom the perception is transmitted, to the generative encounter rather than substituting for it. The mark of the generative fate, in the vocabulary this series has built, is that the symbolisation is organised around the empty place and does not settle it. A perception symbolised generatively keeps the incommensurable core of what was perceived unfilled, presenting a form that points toward the real value at its centre without claiming to have captured it, and so remains an invitation to perceive again rather than a receipt for having perceived. The love letter that says the day was beautiful in a way that sends its reader back to the day, the shared word between two people that names a recurring quality of their evenings and thereby deepens their attention to it, the poem that does not exhaust the light it speaks of but teaches the eye to return to it: these are symbolisations whose fate is generative, because each returns its participants to the generative relation and leaves the real value at its heart uncommandeered. Such symbolisation is, moreover, the very medium of relational aesthetic life, since it is only through symbols of this kind that the perception generated between two people can be sedimented into a form they can revisit together. Far from being a fall, the generative symbol is how a shared aesthetics accumulates. The paper will return to this in its account of the benevolent sign, where the symbolic arrangement of a shared life becomes one of the practical models of everyday aesthetic generation (§12).

4.3 The appropriative fate

A symbolisation may instead appropriate, and this is the fate the diagnosis glimpsed. It does so when the symbol is substituted for the perception rather than opened onto it, when possessing the token of having-seen takes the place of the seeing. The photograph taken so that the meal need not be tasted, the moment narrated so that it need not be undergone, the ordinary arranged into a legible sign of itself for display and archived in place of being lived: in each the symbol closes over the perception it was meant to carry, settling the real value into a commensurable and exchangeable mark. The appropriative symbol belongs, in the value

theory of this series, to the register that is most readily stolen, the symbolic value that can be counted, compared, accumulated, and displayed. Its social form is the one this paper will later confront under its own name, the spectacle, in which perception is handed over to the sign and the generative encounter is replaced by the consumption of images; that confrontation belongs to the chapter on justice, where the political economy of the appropriative symbol can be given its full weight (§13). What must be fixed here is only the structure of the appropriative fate as such. It is not that a symbol has been used, for the generative fate also uses symbols. It is that the symbol has been settled, closed over the empty place it should have kept open, converted from an invitation to perceive into a possession that dispenses with perceiving. The appropriative symbol does not transmit a perception; it retires one.

4.4 The criterion

The two fates must be told apart by a criterion that does not appeal to whether a symbol was used, since both use symbols, nor to any inner sincerity of the one who symbolises, since the difference is structural and not a matter of avowed intention. This series has such a criterion already, and the present distinction is its instance in the register of perception. A relational process carries a good or a bad character according to the sign of the holonomy of its value cycle: the good cycle returns to its root with a genuine surplus generated around the empty place, an endogenous increment produced by the internal tension of the relation and possessed by no one, which the formal companion of this series renders as a positive geometric phase [3, 45]; the bad cycle either generates no surplus across its return or generates one only by external extraction, closing the loop and settling the real value it should have circled. The generative symbolisation is the positive holonomy of this cycle in the domain of shared perception. It returns the perceivers to the encounter with a surplus of attention and shared meaning that neither owns and that was produced by their joint perceiving, and it leaves the incommensurable centre unsettled, so that the cycle can turn again. The appropriative symbolisation is the vanishing or the negativity of that holonomy. It closes the loop, settles the centre into an exchangeable token, and returns the perceivers not to the encounter but to the possession of its sign, from which no further generation issues. The criterion is therefore neither the presence of the symbol nor the psychology of the symboliser but the sign of the holonomy: whether the symbolisation, taken through its full cycle, returns a surplus to the shared perception around an unsettled centre, or retires the perception into a settled and possessable mark. With this the debt of the diagnosis is paid. The decorative symbolisation named among the pathologies of the everyday is not the intervention of the symbol, which is the condition of any shared aesthetics, but the appropriative fate of that intervention, the symbolisation whose holonomy has gone to zero or turned negative; and the cure for it is not the abolition of the symbol but the cultivation of the other fate, the generative symbolisation whose possibility this section has established and whose practice the later parts of the paper will develop.

5. Value, Perception, and Circulation

The two preceding sections established that perception is generated under a prior frame and that its symbolisation may generate or appropriate. Neither has yet asked what is generated, in the register of value, when perception goes well, nor what is stolen when it goes badly, nor why the everyday should be the place where the answer matters most. This section supplies the value theory the paper's argument has so far leaned on without stating. It does three things in sequence. It sets out how the perception of value, of the ethical, of the just, and of the beautiful is generated across the three registers this series has used throughout. It shows, with the political economy of the senses, that the frame under which perception is generated is itself historically produced, so that perceptual capacity is never a natural endowment but a social product. And it isolates what is peculiar to everyday aesthetic value, the low-amplitude, high-frequency, non-accumulable value that is, for exactly those reasons, the hardest to steal, before closing on the circulation of that value and the justice of its return.

5.1 The perception of value across the registers

Perception does not merely deliver objects; it delivers them as valuable, as fitting or unfitting, as beautiful or mean, and the different kinds of value it delivers are generated differently. The three-register account this series has developed can be brought to bear directly on perception, and doing so clarifies what an education of perception would be educating. In the register of the imaginary, value is perceived as an idealised completeness projected onto the object, the beauty that promises to fill a lack and to make the perceiver whole; this is the value of the perfect image, and it is exhausting in the precise sense that it can never be possessed without disappointing, since the completeness it promises was the perceiver's own projected wish. In the register of the symbolic, value is perceived as a place in a system of differences, the worth a thing has by its rank, its price, its position in an order of comparison; this is the value that can be counted and exchanged, and it is, as the previous section found, the value most readily appropriated, because what is commensurable can be transferred. In the register of the real, value is perceived around the empty place, as the incommensurable worth of what cannot be ranked, priced, or substituted, the value that gathers around the *das Ding* at the centre of a genuine attachment and that no symbolic equivalent can discharge. The perception of the beautiful, of the ethical, and of the just each runs across these registers. The beautiful may be perceived as imaginary completeness, as symbolic distinction, or as real and incommensurable singularity; the ethical may be perceived as an idealised purity, as conformity to a coded rule, or as the irreducible claim of a particular other; the just may be perceived as an imagined harmony, as an accountable balance of exchangeable goods, or as the real and unsettleable demand that no participant be reduced to fuel. An education of perception is, among other things, an education in which register one's perception of value chiefly moves in, and the wager of this paper is that a cultivated everyday perception is one drawn increasingly toward the register of the real, where alone, on this series' account, endogenously good value is carried.

5.2 The political economy of the senses

The frame under which perception is generated is not given by nature, and the claim that it is plastic, which the next spine will establish physiologically, has a social form that must be stated first, because it bears directly on justice. Marx stated it in the 1844 manuscripts with a directness that has not been improved upon: the forming of the five senses, he wrote, is a labour of the entire history of the world down to the present [29]. The senses are not a fixed biological endowment through which a ready-made world is received; they are themselves produced, historically and socially, so that what a perceiver is capable of perceiving is the sediment of a history. Marx drew the consequences that matter here. The perceiver bound by crude practical need has only a restricted sense: to the starving, food exists only in its abstract character as food and not in its human form; the care-burdened and poverty-stricken have no sense for the finest play; the dealer in minerals sees the commercial value of the stone but not its beauty, having, in Marx's phrase, no mineralogical sense. Perceptual incapacity is here shown to be produced by a mode of life, and aesthetic perception in particular to be conditioned by the material circumstances that free or bind the senses. This has a contemporary extension that the argument requires, since the mode of production under which perception is now formed has made a commodity of perception's own scarce condition. Attention, Simon observed, is what a wealth of information consumes, so that an information-rich world is an attention-poor one, and the efficient allocation of a now-scarce attention becomes an economic problem [43]. The everyday perception this paper cares about is conducted under precisely this regime: an economy organised to capture and resell attention systematically draws off the perceptual capacity that everyday aesthetic life requires, outsourcing the perceiver's seeing to a flow of engineered images and leaving the light on the wall unattended not by accident but by design. The political economy of the senses therefore joins the diagnosis of §2 to the theory of justice the paper will reach: the habituation and numbing named there are not merely private failures of attention but the subjective face of a social production of perceptual incapacity, and the appropriative symbolisation of §4 is the cultural form through which that production operates. Who can perceive the everyday, and how well, is in part a question of political economy.

5.3 The value of everyday aesthetic perception

Everyday aesthetic value has a character of its own, and naming it precisely is one of this paper's contributions, because that character is what makes everyday aesthetic value at once endangered and peculiarly resistant to theft. It is, first, low in amplitude. No single instance of it makes a large claim; the value of this morning's light is small, and makes no demand comparable to that of a masterwork. It is, second, high in frequency. What is small in each instance is nonetheless delivered continuously, so that the aggregate everyday aesthetic value of a life is very large, carried in a multitude of minor increments rather than a few major ones. It is, third, non-accumulable. Everyday aesthetic value cannot be stored, collected, or held as a stock; the light perceived this morning does not deposit a quantity of value that can be drawn on tomorrow, for its value was in the perceiving and passed with it, and tomorrow's must be generated anew. These three features together yield a fourth, which is decisive for

the argument. Everyday aesthetic value is, of all aesthetic value, the hardest to appropriate. What is low in amplitude offers little worth expropriating in any single instance; what is non-accumulable cannot be stored and therefore cannot be stockpiled, converted, or transferred; and what must be generated afresh at each occurrence cannot be captured once and possessed. The masterwork can be bought, insured, and hung as a sign of its owner's standing, its symbolic value abstracted from any perceiving and made to circulate as capital. The light on the wall cannot. Its value exists only in the recurrent generative event of its being perceived, resists conversion into a possessable and exchangeable token, and so remains, structurally, close to the register of the real. This is why the everyday, for all its exposure to habituation, is the privileged site of endogenously good aesthetic value. Precisely because it is too small, too frequent, and too fleeting to be worth stealing, it is the aesthetic value least corrupted by appropriation, and the one whose generation an education of perception can most hope to protect.

5.4 Circulation and the justice of return

Value that is generated must circulate, and the character of its circulation is the difference between a good and a bad aesthetic life. This series has drawn the distinction sharply, and it applies without alteration here. In a good cycle, the value generated in perception returns to the perceivers with an endogenous surplus produced by the internal tension of their shared attending, a surplus possessed by no one and settling nothing, so that the cycle can turn again with the real value at its centre still unfilled. In a bad cycle, the value either fails to return, dissipated into habituation, or returns only by external extraction, one party's perceptual life drawn off to feed another's. The just cycle, in the terms developed with Eglash, is the one in which every party to the generative process is a beneficiary of it and none is reduced to fuel [15]. This condition has a specifically aesthetic violation that the paper will pursue under the name of the spectacle and the theory of justice (§13), but its structure can be fixed now. There is an aesthetic extraction in which one person's perceptual labour sustains another's aesthetic consumption without return: the arranged and maintained beauty of a life or a place that is drawn upon by those who did not make it and returned to those who did as nothing, the aestheticised regard that consumes a person as scenery and gives back no share in the seeing. Such extraction is the bad cycle in the register of perception, an appropriation of aesthetic value in which the generativity of one is expropriated as the consumption of another. The good cycle is its contrary: a circulation of everyday aesthetic value in which those who generate the perception are those who benefit from it, in which the surplus returns to the shared attending that produced it, and in which no one is rendered the unattended maintainer of a beauty that others consume. To cultivate everyday aesthetic perception is therefore never a merely private refinement. It is to sustain a circulation of aesthetic value whose justice is measured by whether the value returns to all who generate it, and this is the point at which the aesthetics of the everyday becomes answerable, at its root and not by later addition, to the theory of justice.

6. The Philosophy of the Body

The second spine holds that perception is plastic, and that the cultivation of perception is therefore a real training rather than a figure of speech. Before that claim receives its empirical body from the neuroscience of the perceiving brain (§7), it must be given its philosophical form, for the empirical results are only intelligible as an education of perception if perception is first understood to be the kind of thing an education could reach. This section supplies that form by way of the body. It shows, from the phenomenology of embodiment and from the enactive tradition in cognitive science, that perceiving is a bodily accomplishment, a skilled coupling of a body with its world rather than a mental registration behind the eyes; and that because it is a bodily skill, it is the kind of capacity that is acquired, refined, and reshaped through the history of a body's engagements. Plasticity, in other words, is not first a neural fact awaiting philosophical interpretation. It is entailed by what perception already is, once perception is understood as embodied. The neuroscience of the next section will then be read not as the discovery that perception can be trained but as the physiological account of a trainability the philosophy of the body already requires.

6.1 The phenomenology of the body

Phenomenology distinguished, before cognitive science reached the matter, between the body one has and the body one is. The lived body, the *Leib*, is not the object-body, the *Körper*, that anatomy describes and that one might survey as one surveys any thing in the world; it is the body as it is lived from within, the seat and the medium of perceiving rather than one of perception's objects. Merleau-Ponty made this lived body the ground of all perceiving. To perceive is not to receive impressions in a mind to which the body is external hardware; it is to bring to bear a bodily hold on the world, a hold organised by the body schema that arranges the perceptual field in advance of any particular perceiving within it [30]. The body schema is not a representation the perceiver consults; it is an operative, practical familiarity, a way the body already has of being geared into its surroundings, and it is this that perception draws upon. Husserl had already located the same priority in the kinaesthetic constitution of perception: the perceived thing is given as the correlate of possible movements of the perceiver's own body, so that to see the front of a thing is already to carry an implicit bodily sense of the movements that would bring its hidden sides into view [22]. Perceiving is, at its root, a matter of what the body can do and could do, a system of bodily potentialities brought to bear on what appears. This has a consequence the paper needs. If perceiving is a bodily hold, and if the hold is constituted by an acquired practical familiarity and a repertoire of kinaesthetic potentialities, then perceiving is a skill, and skills are cultivated. The lived body is not a fixed apparatus delivering a standard perceptual world; it is a history of acquired bodily competences, and its perceptual world is the correlate of that history. The everyday is where this is most fully true, since it is in the unremarkable and repeated engagements of ordinary bodily life, the ten thousand small dealings with familiar things, that the body schema is chiefly formed and reformed. What one can perceive in an ordinary room is the sediment of how one's body has learned to inhabit ordinary rooms.

6.2 The enactive genealogy

Cognitive science reached the same conclusion from its own side and gave it a sharper operational edge, and its convergence with phenomenology is not accidental, since the enactive programme took the reconciliation of the two as its explicit aim. The founding claim of that programme is a direct denial of the picture on which perception is the internal representation of a pre-given world. Cognition, Varela, Thompson, and Rosch proposed, is not the representation of a ready-made world by a ready-made mind but the enactment of a world and a mind together, on the basis of the history of actions a living being performs; cognition is embodied action, and perceiving is a mode of it [44]. Perception brings forth a perceived world through the sensorimotor coupling of an agent with its environment rather than mirroring an environment given in advance. Two developments of this claim supply what the paper’s second spine requires. The first is Gibson’s ecological account, from which the enactive tradition took its start: the primary objects of perception are affordances, the possibilities for action that a thing or a place offers to a perceiver whose bodily capacities they answer to, so that to perceive is directly to perceive what the environment affords, and the perceived world is a field of action-possibilities correlative to a body’s powers [19]. What one perceives is a function of what one’s body can do, and a differently capable body perceives a differently afforded world. The second is the sensorimotor account of O’Regan and Noë, on which perceptual content is constituted by the perceiver’s practical mastery of the regularities linking movement and sensory change: to see is to exercise an implicit knowledge of how sensory input would vary with one’s own action, so that what one sees is not a static internal picture but a grasp of a structured space of possible sensorimotor engagements [31, 34]. Both developments carry the same implication for cultivation, and it is the implication the whole spine was raised to secure. If perceptual content is constituted by the mastery of sensorimotor regularities, and if the perceived world is the correlate of a body’s affordance-answering capacities, then perceptual capacity is precisely a mastery, an acquired competence that can be extended and refined by the enlargement of the sensorimotor repertoire it rests on. A perception is not a fixed output of a standard organism; it is the exercise of a skill whose sophistication is a function of a history of engagement, and which further engagement can deepen. The philosophy of the body thus delivers the second spine in advance of any neuroscience: because perceiving is an embodied skill, a coupling constituted by acquired sensorimotor mastery, perception is intrinsically the kind of capacity an education could cultivate. What remains is to show, in the physiology of the perceiving brain, the mechanism by which this cultivation actually occurs, and to defend it against the charge that what such a mechanism trains is not perception but mere preference. That is the work of the section that follows.

7. The Neural Plasticity of Perception

The philosophy of the body established that perceiving is an embodied skill and therefore, in principle, the kind of capacity an education could reach. This section supplies the mechanism. It is the most empirical chapter of the paper, and it carries the second spine’s weight, because a claim that perception can be cultivated is idle unless the perceiving system is in fact modifiable

by experience in the relevant way. The neuroscience of the last decades has established that it is, and established it at the level that matters: not merely that preferences shift or that judgements are learned, but that the perceptual system itself, down to the tuning of neurons in early sensory cortex, is reorganised by training. The section sets out this evidence, connects it to the predictive account already introduced, and then meets the objection that the neuroscience of the aesthetic measures pleasure rather than perception, an objection this paper must answer with particular care because answering it is where its own use of neuroscience becomes distinctive. It closes by drawing, from the very plasticity it has established, the line between the cultivation of perception and its commodified training, which is the second spine’s ethical bound.

7.1 Plasticity as the empirical premise of cultivation

The enabling fact is that neural plasticity is not an exceptional or developmental state of the brain but its ongoing condition. It was once assumed that the perceptual system fixed early, that after a critical period in development the neural mechanisms of early sensory processing were no longer modifiable, and that what improvement adults showed with practice was a matter of higher cognition, of decision and judgement laid over an unchanging perceptual base. This assumption has not survived the evidence. Cortical representations of sensory input remain plastic in the mature brain, and the reorganisation of neural circuits by experience is the normal ongoing state of the nervous system across the lifespan [20]. This is the premise on which an education of perception rests. If the perceptual system were fixed after development, the cultivation of perception could reach only the judgements and associations built on top of a standard perceiving, and the paper’s second spine would collapse into a claim about taste rather than sight. Because the perceptual system is plastic throughout life, the cultivation of perception can be what the paper claims it is: a training of perceiving itself.

7.2 Perceptual learning and cortical reorganisation

The direct evidence is the phenomenon of perceptual learning: the sustained and robust improvement, through repeated practice or exposure, in the ability to discriminate and identify perceptual features, an improvement that develops gradually and largely without conscious effort and is maintained over months and years [48]. Perceptual learning is not the acquisition of a belief about what one sees; it is an enhancement of the seeing. Its behavioural signature, improved discrimination at the trained task, is accompanied by measurable change in the nervous system at multiple levels, including the tuning of neurons in early sensory cortex, the correlational structure of sensory populations, and the weighting by which sensory evidence is read out for perception [20, 48]. What training alters is the perceptual apparatus itself, the machinery by which a stimulus becomes a discriminated feature, and not merely a downstream decision about an already-fixed percept. For the argument of this paper the significance is exact. When it is claimed that a person may be brought to perceive the everyday more finely, to discriminate qualities of light, texture, sound, and taste that were previously undifferentiated, the claim names a real and studied form of neural change and not a metaphor of enrichment. The refinement of perception is the perceptual learning of the everyday, and it has the same

standing as the perceptual learning studied in the laboratory.

7.3 Expertise and the reorganised perceiver

The most vivid form of the evidence is the perceptual expert, and the expert cases matter to this paper because they show the endpoint toward which cultivation tends. Sustained, deliberate engagement with a domain reorganises the brain, structurally and functionally, in ways that imaging has documented across musicians, athletes, and other trained perceivers [48]. The trained musician hears a texture of sound where the untrained hears an undifferentiated chord, and the difference is not merely that the musician has words for what they hear; their auditory processing has been reshaped by training so that the discrimination is perceptual. The taster discriminates in a mouthful of wine what the novice cannot detect at all; the trained eye of the radiologist sees, in a field the layperson finds uniform, the salient and the anomalous. These are not additions of knowledge to a common perceptual base. They are reorganisations of perceiving, acquired through a history of engagement, by which the expert comes to inhabit a perceptually richer world than the novice occupies before the same stimulus. The expert perceiver is the demonstration, at the limit, of what the cultivation of everyday perception aims at in small: a person whose sustained attention to a domain has remade their capacity to perceive within it, so that the world answers their trained perception with a richness it withholds from the untrained. What the sommelier is to wine, a cultivated everyday perceiver is to the light of ordinary rooms and the textures of ordinary days.

7.4 The predictive implementation

These findings are not a loose collection; they are unified by the predictive account of the brain already introduced, and the unification matters because it ties the plasticity of perception to the generativity established in the first spine. If perception is the generation of a predicted world corrected by sensory error [18], then perceptual learning is the refinement of the generative model under the pressure of that error, and the reorganisation documented in sensory cortex is the physical form of a model that has been retuned by experience to predict a domain more finely. The expert's richer perceptual world is the world afforded by a more finely differentiated generative model, one whose predictions carve the domain at joints the novice's model does not represent. This connects the second spine to the first at the level of mechanism. The generativity of perception and the plasticity of perception are one fact seen twice: perception generates its world under a model, and cultivation is the retuning of that model, so that to cultivate perception is to reshape the very generative activity by which perception constructs what is perceived. The everyday, once more, is where the retuning most matters, because it is the domain in which an unrefined generative model most readily predicts the familiar away into invisibility, and in which a cultivated model most transforms what is available to be perceived.

7.5 The objection from pleasure

An objection arises precisely from the existing neuroscience of the aesthetic, and it must be met with care, because meeting it is where this paper's use of neuroscience declares its difference.

Neuroaesthetics, the field named by Zeki and developed through the aesthetic-triad model of Chatterjee and Vartanian, studies the neural bases of aesthetic experience by way of three interacting systems, the sensory-motor, the emotion-valuation, and the meaning-knowledge, and its characteristic finding locates the experience of beauty in the pleasure centres and reward circuits of the brain, with pleasure treated as a necessary if not sufficient condition of the beautiful [7, 50]. The objection this invites against the present paper runs as follows: if the neuroscience of the aesthetic shows that aesthetic experience is a matter of reward and valuation, then what any training of the aesthetic trains is preference, liking, the hedonic response to a stimulus, and not perception at all; the talk of cultivating perception collapses into the conditioning of pleasure. The paper's answer turns the structure of the aesthetic triad against the objection rather than denying the triad. It grants that the emotion-valuation system is engaged in aesthetic experience and that reward is a real component of it. But the reduction of the aesthetic to reward conflates distinct systems that the triad itself separates, and it conflates, within the valuation system, the wanting and the liking that a careful reward neuroscience has shown to be dissociable [2, 23]. The cultivation this paper is concerned with does not principally engage the emotion-valuation system at all. It engages the sensory-motor system, the perceptual apparatus whose plasticity the preceding sections documented; its object is not the intensification of the pleasure taken in a stimulus but the reorganisation of the perceiving by which the stimulus is discriminated. This is the paper's distinctive claim about the neuroscience of the aesthetic, and it is where a background in the dynamics of perceptual and neural systems earns its place. Where neuroaesthetics has largely measured the reward correlates of preference, asking which stimuli the brain likes, this paper points the neuroscience at a different question, asking how the perceiving itself is reorganised, and locating the aesthetic cultivation of the everyday in the plasticity of perception rather than in the conditioning of reward. The sommelier is not someone trained to like wine more; the sommelier is someone whose perception of wine has been remade. The objection from pleasure holds only against a project that sought to train pleasure, and that is not this project.

7.6 The line between refinement and commodified training

The plasticity that makes cultivation possible makes its abuse possible in the same measure, and the second spine must therefore draw a line within the very trainability it has established. Perception can be reorganised, and it can be reorganised toward the refinement this paper commends or toward an end this paper must mark as its corruption. The refinement of perception enlarges the perceiver's world, deepening the discriminations available to them and returning them to the everyday with a richer capacity to generate its perception. The commodified training of perception does the contrary under the same mechanism: it reorganises perceiving so as to bind it to consumption, training the eye to discriminate the marks of status and the triggers of purchase, tuning the perceptual system to the demands of an attention economy that profits from what it teaches the senses to want. Both are perceptual learning; both retune the generative model; both are, at the level of mechanism, the same neural plasticity. The line between them is not drawn in the neuroscience, which is neutral between them, but in the value theory the paper has already supplied. Refinement is the cultivation of a perception

whose value returns to the perceiver and to the shared attending that generated it, a perception drawn toward the register of the real and the good circulation of everyday aesthetic value. Commodified training is the cultivation of a perception whose value is extracted, a perceiving reorganised to serve a circuit of consumption in which the perceiver’s own trained senses are turned into an instrument of their capture. The plasticity is one; the two uses of it are told apart by whether the reorganised perception generates value that returns to the perceiver or is harnessed to extract it. This is the ethical bound of the second spine, and it hands the argument forward to the theory of justice, where the social distribution of perceptual cultivation, and the question of whose senses are refined and whose are trained for capture, becomes a question of justice proper (§13).

8. The Convergence of the Schools: Toward Generative Relational Aesthetic Education

The paper has now let five traditions speak, and it has kept them apart while they did. Phenomenology, cognitive science, and psychoanalysis each gave an account of how perception is generated; the philosophy of the body and the neuroscience of plasticity each gave an account of how the perceiving body is formed and reformed; and along the way the political economy of the senses showed the forming to be historical. This section does the work those separations were holding in reserve. It argues that the traditions converge, that their convergence is on a single structure, and that this structure is what licenses the paper’s proposal rather than leaving it a preference asserted over the disciplines. The argument matters because without it the breadth of the preceding parts would be an eclecticism, a gathering of authorities who happen to point the same way; and a proposal resting on an eclecticism could always be met by choosing different authorities. If instead the traditions can be shown to arrive, by independent routes, at one account of what perceiving is, then the proposal built on that account stands on the convergence and not on a choice among schools. The section establishes the pairwise correspondences first, states the shared structure they compose, and then draws from that structure the two claims the rest of the paper needs: that perception, being what the convergence shows it to be, can be cultivated, and that its cultivation must be relational.

8.1 Phenomenology and the predictive brain

The first correspondence is between the phenomenology of perception and the predictive account of the brain, and it is close enough that the two can be read as one finding in two idioms. Phenomenology held that perceiving brings a prior organisation to bear on what appears: the body schema arranges the perceptual field in advance of any particular perceiving, and passive synthesis has already constructed the field’s unities before active attention arrives [22, 30]. The predictive account holds that the brain generates its perceptual world from a prior model and admits sensation as the correction of prediction rather than as perception’s origin [18]. Set side by side, the body schema and the generative model are the same posit named twice: a prior organisation the perceiver brings to the world, which structures what can appear before any particular appearance, and which perception mistakes for the world because it operates

beneath notice. Passive synthesis and the downward flow of prediction are one direction of construction described from two sides, the lived and the computational. This correspondence is not the paper’s invention; it is the subject of an active literature that has taken the reconciliation of predictive processing with embodied and enactive cognition as its explicit task, most influentially in Clark’s argument that the predictive brain is an embodied and world-engaging one rather than a sealed inference engine [8, 9]. The paper stands within that literature and draws from it the point its own argument requires: that the phenomenological and the neuroscientific accounts of perception are not two theories between which one must choose but two disclosures of a single structure, in which perceiving is the bringing of a prior generative organisation to bear on a world it thereby constructs.

8.2 Psychoanalysis and the frame

The second correspondence supplies what the first leaves open. Phenomenology and the predictive account agree that perception constructs under a prior frame, but neither, in itself, says what gives the frame its particular shape, why it is organised so and not otherwise, salient here and blind there. Psychoanalysis answers: the frame is organised by desire. Lacan’s analysis of the scopic field located a gaze that does not belong to the seeing subject and that functions as the object-cause of desire, around which the visual field is arranged, so that what shows up as visible and what remains unregistered is decided beneath consciousness by the structure of a desire [24]. Read into the vocabulary of the convergence, this is a claim about the generative model and the body schema: the prior frame is not neutral, and what sets its selectivity, its saliences and its blindnesses, is in the relevant cases a fantasy structure, a desire that has organised the model in advance of any particular perceiving. The high-level prior that predictive processing places at the top of the perceptual hierarchy is, where a human perceiver’s desire is engaged, a fantasy frame; the precision the perceiver assigns to one part of the field rather than another is the weighting of attention by what the perceiver wants, has lost, or circles. Psychoanalysis thus specifies, at the level of desire, the content of the prior that the other two traditions described only in form. It tells us not merely that perception is framed but whose frame it is and around what lack it is bent, and it thereby completes the account of the generated perception by giving the generation a motive.

8.3 The historical production of the frame

The third correspondence guards the convergence against a mistake it would otherwise invite. If the frame under which perception is generated were taken as a fixed structure, given with the organism or the psyche once and for all, then the account would have naturalised perception and closed off the possibility on which the whole paper turns, that perception can be otherwise and can be cultivated. The political economy of the senses forbids this closure. The frame is itself produced, historically and socially: the forming of the five senses, Marx wrote, is a labour of the entire history of the world, so that what a perceiver can perceive is the sediment of a history and not the endowment of a nature [29]. Set into the convergence, this is the claim that the generative model, the body schema, and the fantasy frame are not fixed priors

but formed ones, laid down by a history of engagement that is at once bodily, libidinal, and social. The prior that predictive processing places at the top of the hierarchy has a history; the body schema that phenomenology describes is the sediment of a life; the fantasy frame that organises desire was itself organised, by a biography lived within a social order. The three traditions had each described a prior frame; the political economy of the senses adds that the frame is a product, and therefore alterable, and therefore the possible object of a cultivation or a corruption. Without this third correspondence the convergence would describe a perception fixed under its frame; with it, the convergence describes a perception whose frame is a historical achievement, open in principle to being formed otherwise.

8.4 The shared structure

The three correspondences compose a single account, and it can now be stated. Perception is the construction of a world under a prior frame, in a continual negotiation between the frame and the sensory world, in which the frame supplies the organisation and the world supplies the correction, and the perceived is the issue of their negotiation rather than the deliverance of either alone. This is the shared structure on which the five traditions converge, and each tradition contributes one determination of it. From phenomenology and cognitive science: the frame is a generative organisation, bodily and predictive, that constructs the perceived in advance of sensation and is corrected by it. From psychoanalysis: the frame is organised by desire, bent around a lack, selective in its saliences and its blindnesses. From the political economy of the senses: the frame is historically produced, the sediment of a bodily, libidinal, and social history, and therefore alterable. And from the neuroscience of plasticity, joining the account at the level of mechanism, the frame is neurally plastic, its retuning by experience the physical form of its alterability [20, 48]. The perceived world is thus the negotiated product of a frame that is generative, desiring, historical, and plastic, brought to bear on a sensory world that corrects it. No single tradition holds this whole; each holds one face of it; and their convergence is the paper's warrant for treating perception as it now proceeds to treat it, as a generated, framed, and alterable accomplishment rather than a fixed receiving.

8.5 From the structure to the proposal

Two claims follow from the shared structure, and they are the two the rest of the paper was raised on. The first is that perception can be cultivated, and this now follows not as a hope but as a consequence. If the frame under which perception is generated is plastic and historically produced, then it can be formed deliberately as well as it is formed by accident, and the deliberate forming of the perceptual frame is what aesthetic education is. The convergence thus converts the possibility of aesthetic education from an assumption into a result: because the perceptual frame is generative, historical, and plastic, it is the kind of thing an education could reach, and the cultivation of perception is the intentional cultivation of the frame under which perception generates its world. The second claim is that this cultivation must be relational, and it follows from the same structure once one asks how a frame is in fact formed. The frame is laid down by a history of engagement, and the engagements that form it are, for a human perceiver,

overwhelmingly shared: the body schema is trained in a world of others, the fantasy frame is organised in relation to others' desire, and the historically produced senses are produced in a social order and not in solitude. A frame formed in relation cannot be reformed in isolation, and the deliberate cultivation of a perceptual frame therefore cannot be the private project of a single perceiver working on their own sensibility. It must work on and through the relations in which the frame was and is formed. This is the point at which the convergence delivers the paper's title. Because the perceptual frame is generated, plastic, and relationally formed, an education of perception is possible, and because it is relationally formed, that education must cultivate the relation and not only the individual within it. Generative relational aesthetic education is not a preference laid over the disciplines. It is what the convergence of the disciplines, followed to its consequence, requires. The remaining parts of the paper develop what such an education is: how the tradition of aesthetic education must be revised to become relational (§9), how the spaces in which perception is formed may be designed (§10), what its practice looks like set within the existing theory of everyday life (§11, §12), and what justice requires of it (§13).

9. Aesthetic Education: From Tradition to the Relational

The convergence delivered the paper's title as a consequence: because the perceptual frame is generated, plastic, and relationally formed, an education of perception is possible and must be relational. This section begins the development of that education by setting it against the tradition it revises. It is a tradition of the first rank, and the paper approaches it with the respect owed to the thought it is departing from, since the departure is intelligible only against a full statement of what is departed from. The section therefore does three things. It states the tradition of aesthetic education at the level of its theory, from Schiller through Dewey and Cai Yuanpei to Read and Greene, taking care to render each at its strongest and to mark where the tradition already strains toward what this paper will claim. It isolates the shared presupposition that nonetheless unites these otherwise different thinkers, that the unit of aesthetic cultivation is the individual. And it states the difference that follows from the convergence, that generative relational aesthetic education takes the relation for its unit, before showing how the individual and the relational are held together in the cultivation itself. The treatment here is of the tradition's theory; its practical models, the actual methods by which it has trained perception, are taken up later, where they can be set beside the paper's own models of practice (§11).

9.1 The tradition at its strongest

Aesthetic education has a founding text, and it set the terms the tradition would keep. Schiller's letters proposed that the human being is divided between a sensuous drive, bound to matter and the life of feeling, and a formal drive, bound to reason and law, and that neither alone yields freedom; the aesthetic, through what he called the play drive, reconciles the two, restoring to the person a wholeness in which sensibility and reason are no longer at war [41]. It is essential to render Schiller fairly here, because his account is not the private cultivation of taste it is

sometimes reduced to. The reconciliation he sought had a political horizon: the aesthetic education of the human being was, for him, the path by which a people might become capable of freedom, the aesthetic state the condition of a genuine political one. Schiller is not a straw individualist, and the paper does not treat him as one. Yet the wholeness his education restores is the wholeness of a person, the reconciliation of the drives within a single soul, and the political freedom it opens onto is reached by way of the aesthetic completion of individuals. The unit is the person, however political the person's completion is meant to become.

The tradition's later high points inherit this unit while enriching the account. Dewey brought the aesthetic down from the museum into the continuity of experience, refusing the separation of art from life and locating the aesthetic in the rhythm of doing and undergoing by which any experience may be brought to fullness; his was a democratic aesthetics, holding that every person is capable of the artist's relation to their own experience [12]. This is the tradition at its most hospitable to the everyday, and the paper draws on it gratefully. But the artist Dewey would make of every person is each person severally, and the fullness of experience he describes is the fullness of an individual's experience, however much that individual lives among others. Cai Yuanpei, proposing in 1917 that aesthetic education replace religion, appropriated the Kantian and Schillerian account for a China in crisis and gave the tradition one of its most socially ambitious statements, aesthetic education as the cultivation of a citizenry; yet the development he sought was the full development of the person in the three domains of knowledge, will, and feeling, an individually focused vision even at its most national in aim [6]. Read, making art the medium of a general education, sought through it the integration of the individual personality [37]. And Greene, who of all the tradition comes nearest to what this paper will claim, made aesthetic education the deliberate fostering of informed and imaginative encounters with art, and turned in the end toward community, toward the classroom as a social undertaking in which a teacher must see and hear students in all their plurality [21]. Greene reaches the threshold of the relational and is the tradition's most generous approach to it. But what her aesthetic education releases is the imagination, and the imagination it releases is each student's; the community she envisions is the condition and the medium of that release rather than itself the thing cultivated. The tradition strains toward the relational in Greene and does not cross into it.

9.2 The shared presupposition

Across these differences one presupposition holds, and naming it is the point of the survey. In each case the unit of aesthetic cultivation is the individual. What is to be brought toward completion, fullness, integration, or imaginative freedom is a person: Schiller's soul reconciled in play, Dewey's individual brought to the fullness of an experience, Cai's citizen developed in knowledge and will and feeling, Read's integrated personality, Greene's student whose imagination is released. That the completion is often meant to have social or political issue does not alter its unit; the person is completed first, and the polity or the community is reached through or after the completion of persons. This is not a failing of the tradition on its own terms, for the tradition took the cultivation of individuals to be exactly its task. It becomes a limit only

in the light of the convergence, which showed that the perceptual frame an aesthetic education would cultivate is not formed in the individual first and shared afterward, but formed in relation from the start. If the frame is relationally constituted, then an education that takes the individual as its unit works downstream of where the frame is actually formed, cultivating the person's sensibility while leaving unaddressed the relation in which that sensibility was and is generated. The tradition's presupposition is not false about individuals; it is incomplete about where perception comes from.

9.3 The relational difference

Generative relational aesthetic education takes the relation for its unit, and this is the whole of its difference from the tradition. What it cultivates is not, in the first instance, an individual's capacity to perceive the everyday aesthetically, but the capacity of a relation to go on generating aesthetic perception between those who stand in it. The distinction is not a matter of emphasis or of adding a social dimension to an individual cultivation. It is a difference in the object of cultivation. Where the tradition asks how a person's sensibility may be brought toward completion, this paper asks how two people may cultivate between them a shared perceptual life that neither carries alone, a capacity resident in the relation rather than in either party, by which their common world is continually generated as perceived. The convergence licenses this shift and indeed requires it: since the frame under which perception is generated is laid down in shared engagement, organised in relation to others' desire, and produced within a social order, the deliberate formation of that frame must work on the relations that form it, and cannot be accomplished by either party working alone on their own sensibility. The everyday is where this is most concretely true. The shared perceptual life of two people who live together, the qualities of light and sound and texture and gesture that their common days are made of, is generated in and by their relation, in the ten thousand small mutual attunements of a shared ordinary life; and to cultivate it is to work on that relation's generative capacity, not to improve two sensibilities in parallel and hope they meet. Relational aesthetic education is the deliberate cultivation of the relation's power to generate the perception of a shared everyday.

9.4 The individual and the relational in cultivation

To take the relation as the unit is not to dispense with the individual, and the third face of the paper's thesis, stated at the outset, must now be shown at work in the cultivation itself. The individual and the relational stand in a spiral, and the cultivation runs in both directions of it. An individual's perceptual refinement, the trained discrimination whose neural reality the second spine established, is drawn upon by the relation and is a condition of what the relation can generate: two people cannot generate between them a finely perceived shared world if neither has cultivated the capacity to perceive finely at all, and the sommelier's trained palate, brought into a shared meal, raises what the shared perception of that meal can become. In this direction the individual conditions the relational. But the shared perception generated in the relation returns upon the individual and reshapes their capacity: what two people come to perceive together, each learns to perceive, so that the individual enters the next occasion

already altered by what the relation generated, perceiving now what before the relation they could not. In this direction the relational conditions the individual. Neither pole is prior, and the cultivation is the turning of this spiral, in which refined individual perception feeds the relational generation and the relational generation refines individual perception, and the return does not arrive back at its origin, since each turn leaves both the individuals and the relation altered from where they began. This is why relational aesthetic education does not swallow the individual it declines to take as its unit. It cultivates the relation, and in cultivating the relation it cultivates the individuals, because the relation and the individuals are joined in a spiral that the cultivation sets and keeps turning. The tradition cultivated individuals and hoped the relation would follow; this paper cultivates the relation and shows that the individuals follow, because the perceptual frame was relational before it was ever individual, and returns to the individual by way of the relation that formed it.

10. The Design of Space and Perception

Perception is formed, and it is formed somewhere. The convergence established that the perceptual frame is laid down by a history of engagement; but engagements have places, and the places are largely made. A person's everyday perception is trained, day after day, in built environments that were designed, and the design of those environments is therefore among the concrete means by which perception is cultivated or deadened. This section takes up the spatial dimension of aesthetic education, and it takes it up as a chapter in its own right because the theory of how space forms perception is deep and specific and cannot be compressed into a remark. The section sets out that theory in four registers, the phenomenological, the atmospheric, the design-theoretic, and the political-economic, each of which has studied how built space acts on perception; and it then states the paper's own contribution, that space trains or dulls the perception of those who dwell in it, that the home is the privileged relational field in which everyday perception is continually generated, and that the design of space carries a question of justice about whose perception is cared for and whose is starved.

10.1 The phenomenology of built space

Architecture has its own phenomenology, and it reached, from the side of the made environment, the same embodiment the paper established from the side of the perceiving body. Pallasmaa's critique of the ocularcentrism of modern building is its sharpest statement. Architecture, he argued, has become an art of the eye alone, a retinal art of images fixed by the hurried glance of the camera, and in privileging vision it has starved the other senses through which a body actually inhabits a space, the touch of a handrail, the acoustic of a room, the temperature and smell and underfoot texture that make a place bodily habitable [35]. The eyes of the skin are the whole sensing body brought to bear on built space, and a building addressed only to the eye trains a diminished perception in those who live in it. Bachelard, earlier, had shown the inward face of the same relation: the spaces of a dwelling shape thought, memory, and reverie, so that the house is not a neutral container of a life but a formative structure of the perceiving and remembering that go on within it [1]. Norberg-Schulz gave the relation its name

in the *genius loci*, the character or spirit of a place that a phenomenology of architecture must attend to, the specific way a place gathers and discloses a world to those who dwell there [32]. Across these the finding is one: built space is a formative condition of perception, addressing the sensing body, shaping the inward life, and disclosing a world with a specific character, so that to design a space is to design, in part, the perception of those who will inhabit it.

10.2 Atmosphere and attunement

The aesthetics of atmosphere, introduced earlier as the aesthetic articulation of the relational locus of beauty (§3.5), returns here as the theory of what built space generates. What a designed space produces, on Böhme's account, is an atmosphere, a tuned space in which the qualities radiating from materials, proportions, and light meet the felt body of the one who enters, so that the space attunes its inhabitant to a mood before any object in it is regarded [4]. The atmosphere is the space's primary aesthetic action on perception, the way it sets, beneath notice, the key in which everything within it will be perceived. Eastern spatial thought had refined a cognate insight into a discipline. The Japanese conception of 間, *ma*, treats the interval, the pause, the charged emptiness between things, as itself a positive element of spatial and temporal composition, so that what is not built carries as much of the aesthetic work as what is; a space is attuned as much by its intervals and its held emptiness as by its filled and articulated parts. This will bear directly on one of the paper's models of practice, the leaving of emptiness (§12), for the designed interval is the built form of the field of contingency, a space made so that perception may generate within it rather than being directed to a prescribed object. Atmosphere and *ma* together specify how space acts on perception below the level of the discrete object: it attunes, it sets a key, and it can do so as much by what it withholds as by what it presents.

10.3 Affordance and the design of the everyday

Design theory proper supplies the most concrete register, and it does so through the concept the paper has already drawn on from ecological psychology. Gibson's affordances, the possibilities for action that a thing or place offers to a body whose capacities they answer to (§6.2), became, in Norman's hands, the central concept of a theory of everyday design: a well-designed object communicates its affordances to the user, and where the affordance is not directly perceivable, a signifier is added to indicate it, so that design is the shaping of the perceived possibilities of action that a made thing offers [19, 33]. The bearing on perception is exact and everyday. The objects and spaces of ordinary life, in offering or failing to offer perceivable affordances, train the perception and action of those who use them; a well-made handle teaches the hand, a coherent room teaches the movement through it, and the daily traffic with designed things is a continual, unnoticed schooling of perception in what the made world affords. Norman's title names the paper's own domain, the design of everyday things, and his analysis supplies the fine grain of how designed everyday objects act on the perceiving body that uses them. What his user-centred design largely set aside, the aesthetic and not merely the functional dimension of this shaping, is what the present chapter restores to it: the affordances a space offers are not

only for use but for perception, and a space may afford, or fail to afford, the finely generated aesthetic perception of an ordinary life.

10.4 The production of perceptual space

The formation of perception by space is not innocent of power, and the political economy of the senses established earlier has a spatial extension that this register supplies. Space, Lefebvre argued, is produced: it is not a neutral container in which social life happens but a social product, produced by and reproducing the relations of a mode of production, so that the organisation of space is among the means by which a social order maintains itself [27]. Joined to the claim that the senses are historically produced (§5.2), this yields the proposition the paper needs here: the spaces in which everyday perception is formed are themselves produced under a mode of production, and they form perception in its interest. The retail environment engineered to capture attention and direct it to purchase, the domestic space arranged around the screens that resell the attention they absorb, the built environments that afford consumption richly and generative perception hardly at all, are the spatial production of a perception fitted to an economy. The habituation and numbing diagnosed at the paper's outset are trained, in part, by spaces built to train them. This is the spatial face of the commodified training of perception marked as the second spine's corruption (§7.6): perception is reorganised toward consumption not only by what it is shown but by the very spaces it is shown it in, and the design of space is therefore one of the principal sites at which the cultivation and the corruption of everyday perception are decided.

10.5 The home as a field of perceptual generation

The paper's own contribution gathers these registers to a claim about the home, which is, for the everyday perception this paper cares about most, the decisive designed space. The home is where the greatest part of everyday aesthetic life is generated, the space whose light and sound and texture and arrangement make up the sensory substance of ordinary days, and it is, unlike the retail and the public spaces produced by a distant power, a space its inhabitants themselves in large part make and arrange. This gives the home a double character in the paper's argument. It is, first, the built condition under which a shared everyday perception is trained: the arrangement of a home, its affordances and atmospheres and intervals, forms the perception of those who dwell in it, and a home may be arranged to afford the finely generated perception of ordinary life or to starve it, to attune its inhabitants to their shared days or to distract them from these into the resold attention of the screen. It is, second and distinctively, a space of relational making, since a shared home is arranged by those who share it, and its arrangement is itself one of the practices by which they cultivate between them the perception of their common life. The home is thus not only the space in which relational aesthetic education occurs but one of its media, a designed field that its inhabitants continually remake and that continually reforms their shared perception in turn, in the spiral by which the individuals and the relation form each other. This connects the chapter forward to the models of practice, where the arrangement of a shared space by benevolent signs becomes one of the

concrete forms of everyday aesthetic generation (§12), and it carries the chapter's justice to the threshold of the paper's account of justice proper. For if perception is formed by designed space, and if some are given spaces that afford the cultivation of perception while others are given spaces built to starve it and resell their attention, then the design of space distributes perceptual capacity unequally, and does so along the lines of who can command the making of their own space. Whose home affords the generation of a shared aesthetic life, and whose does not, is a question of justice, and it is to justice that the paper now turns (§13).

11. The Theory and Existing Forms of Everyday Practice

The paper is about to propose models of everyday aesthetic practice, and it owes, before it proposes anything, a full account of the theory and the practice that already occupy this ground. Everyday life has been theorised, its practices studied, and its aesthetics given a scholarly literature; aesthetic education has its methods; and the East has traditions of everyday practice older and more refined than any Western theory of them. To advance a typology of practice without first setting it within this field would be to reinvent, in ignorance, what has been carefully thought, and to earn the objection that the paper does not know the literature it presumes to extend. This section therefore surveys the field in four registers, the theory of practice, the practical methods of aesthetic education, the sub-field of everyday aesthetics, and the practice traditions of the East, and it closes by marking precisely what these leave undone, which is the space the paper's own models are built to occupy. The survey is not a formality. Each of its registers has reached a limit that the paper's typology is designed to pass, and stating the limits precisely is how the typology earns the right to be proposed.

11.1 The theory of practice

The theory of practice supplies the frame within which any account of everyday doing must situate itself. Bourdieu made the habitus its central concept: the durable dispositions, laid down by a social position, that generate a person's practices without being consciously followed, so that practice is the improvisation of an embodied social sense rather than the execution of a rule [5]. The account has great descriptive power and a limit that its critics fixed precisely. De Certeau, granting Bourdieu's analyses, objected that the habitus finally subordinates practice to the law of reproduction, reducing the lucidly described improvisations of everyday life to the reproduction of the social structures that formed them [10]. Against this he set the distinction his own work is known for. Strategies belong to the powers that produce and order a place, the institutions that circumscribe a proper domain; tactics belong to those who lack such a place and who operate within the order others have produced, poaching on its territory, making do, turning the arrangements of the powerful to unforeseen uses in a creative resistance that is influenced by the imposed order but never wholly determined by it [10]. Everyday life, for de Certeau, is the art of these tactics, the inventive reappropriation by ordinary people of a world produced by others. This gives the paper two of its coordinates and, in the same gesture, two of the limits it must pass. Bourdieu's habitus theorises everyday practice as reproduction, which is, in this paper's terms, the closed cycle, the practice that returns the social order to

itself; de Certeau's tactic theorises it as resistance, which is reactive, defined by the imposed order it diverges from. Neither theorises everyday practice as generation, as the endogenous production of new aesthetic value around an unsettled centre. Reproduction and resistance do not exhaust the possibilities of everyday doing, and the possibility they omit, generation, is the one the paper's models are about.

11.2 The practical methods of aesthetic education

The tradition of aesthetic education, whose theory was set out earlier (§9), has also its practical methods, and they belong to this survey because the paper's models are models of practice and must be set beside the practices that already claim this ground. That tradition trained perception and sensibility through determinate means: the guided encounter with works of art, the practice of an art oneself, the disciplines of drawing, music, and craft through which Schiller's and Read's cultivation of the integrated person was actually pursued, and, in the schools that took this most seriously, the sensory education of the whole child, as in the Montessori training of the discriminating senses and the Waldorf cultivation of the aesthetic and imaginative life through rhythm, making, and art. The East placed its practical methods differently, in the long apprenticeships of repeated practice, 稽古, and in the copying of masters through which the arts of calligraphy, painting, and the tea gathering were transmitted, methods in which perception was cultivated not by the appreciation of works but by the disciplined repetition of a making. These methods are real and effective, and the paper does not disparage them. But their unit, as the theory of the tradition already showed, is the individual whose sensibility they refine, and their setting is the reserved one of the lesson, the studio, the practice hall, the guided encounter set apart from ordinary life. What they do not offer is a practice of the everyday as such, conducted in the unreserved flow of ordinary shared living and taking the relation rather than the individual as what it cultivates. The tradition's methods train the person in a space set apart; the paper's models work the relation in the midst of ordinary life.

11.3 The sub-field of everyday aesthetics

Everyday aesthetics is now an established sub-field, and the paper must locate itself within it rather than beside it. Its founding move was to establish that the aesthetic extends far beyond art into the textures of ordinary life, and that this domain deserves the attention aesthetics had reserved for the artwork; Saito's studies of the aesthetics of the familiar are its central statement, and the paper has drawn on them throughout [38, 39]. Leddy located the aesthetic value of ordinary life in the qualities by which the everyday becomes, on attention, extraordinary, developing a broadly Deweyan account of the aura of the ordinary [26]. Others extended the field toward the practices and politics of everyday life, reading the ordinary through the lens of cultural theory. The sub-field has, in short, established the domain, described its phenomena, and defended its worth, and the present paper stands on that achievement. But it is marked by a limit its own participants have debated, and the limit is the one this paper's central claim is pitched against. The sub-field has largely treated everyday aesthetic experience as the private experience of an individual perceiver, a matter of how a person finds the ordinary beautiful;

Saito's account, in its strongest form, holds everyday aesthetic experience to be private and personal in a way that distinguishes it from the public experience of art. What the sub-field has not chiefly done is to theorise everyday aesthetic experience as relationally generated, as the shared production of a perceived world by those who perceive it together, nor to give the mechanism of that generation. It has established that the everyday is aesthetic and left open how the everyday aesthetic is generated between people, which is the question the paper's convergence answered and its models of practice address.

11.4 The practice traditions of the East

The East theorised everyday aesthetic practice, as practice, earlier and more deeply than the West, and the paper's models owe these traditions an acknowledgement that is more than decorative, since several of the models are their descendants. The way of tea made a discipline of the shared aesthetic occasion, treating the preparation and taking of tea as a practice in which attention, gesture, utensil, and space are composed into a single unrepeatable event, and giving that event the name the paper has already made central, 一期一会. Dogen, in the 典座教訓, the instructions for the monastery cook, made the most ordinary practice imaginable, the preparing of meals, into a discipline of awakened attention: the cook is not to regard the ingredients with ordinary eyes or handle them with ordinary feelings, is to bring the same care to the coarsest greens as to the finest cream, and is to work with the nurturing mind that the text names among the three minds of the practice [14]. Cooking, in Dogen, is not preparation for practice but practice itself, the everyday activity through which awakening is actualised, and this is the East's clearest statement of the thesis that everyday doing, rightly done, is where the cultivation of perception occurs. Yanagi's philosophy of 民藝, the ordinary crafts, located beauty in the objects of daily use and in the unselfconscious making of them, a beauty of use that belongs to the ordinary and the anonymous rather than to the signed artwork [49]. These traditions are, in several respects, ahead of the paper, and it learns from them more than it corrects. What it adds to them is not a deeper practice but a theory: the traditions transmit their practices by apprenticeship and example, within frameworks of religious and cultural meaning that the paper does not presume, and they do not, as such, offer the account of why these practices generate, in the terms of a general theory of perception and value, that the paper's convergence supplies. The paper's models aim to state, in a form that does not depend on a particular tradition's framework, the generative structure that these traditions have long enacted.

11.5 What the field leaves undone

The survey can now be gathered into the precise statement of what the field leaves for the paper's models to do. The theory of practice has given everyday doing as reproduction and as resistance, but not as generation. The practical methods of aesthetic education have trained the individual's sensibility in a reserved space, but have not offered a practice of the relation in the unreserved flow of ordinary life. The sub-field of everyday aesthetics has established the everyday as aesthetic and treated it largely as the private experience of an individual, but

has not theorised its relational generation or given its mechanism. And the practice traditions of the East have enacted the generative cultivation of everyday perception with a depth the West has not matched, but have transmitted it by apprenticeship within particular frameworks rather than stating its structure as such. The space these leave open is exact and it is single: a set of models of everyday aesthetic practice that are generative rather than reproductive or merely resistant, relational rather than individual, conducted in the flow of ordinary shared life rather than in a reserved space, and stated in the general terms of the paper's theory of perception and value rather than within a particular tradition. That space is what the next section is built to occupy, and the models it proposes are answerable, one by one, to the limits this survey has fixed.

12. A Typology of Everyday Aesthetic Practice

This section makes the paper's most concrete offering: four models of everyday aesthetic practice, proposed to occupy the space the survey left open, generative rather than reproductive or resistant, relational rather than individual, conducted in the flow of ordinary shared life, and stated in the general terms of the theory the paper has built. Each is given with its theoretical descent made explicit, because a model of practice that could not say what it rests on would be a suggestion rather than a proposal, and the paper's claim is that these four are derived from its theory and not improvised. The models are offered as preliminary and open, a beginning of the typology rather than its closure, and the reason for their openness is internal to the fourth of them, which makes the openness of an aesthetic practice a structural requirement rather than a modesty. The four share a single skeleton, and the section states it first, then develops each model in turn with its basis and its ethics, and closes on the unity of the typology and the sense in which it remains unfinished.

12.1 The common skeleton

The four models are variations on one structure, and seeing the structure first prevents the models from looking like a list. Each moves from a perception or its equivalent, through a reception, through a sharing that enters the relational system, to a reproduction or feedback that returns upon the shared life and begins the cycle again. The skeleton is the good cycle of value in the domain of practice: a generative circuit that returns to its root with a surplus around an unsettled centre, whose positive holonomy is the mark of its goodness (§4.4). What distinguishes the models is where they enter the circuit and what happens at each of its moments. The first enters through active perception and is the paradigm. The second enters through silence and makes reception the suspension of judgement. The third does not directly produce at all, but constructs the field in which the circuit may generate of itself. The fourth iterates the circuit across many turns, refining the strategy by which it is entered. Three of the four, the first, second, and fourth, are the same circuit run at different timescales, single, reflective, and evolutionary; the third is the circuit's complement, the making of room for it. Together they cover the principal temporalities of everyday aesthetic generation, and none is advanced as excluding the others, since a shared life will move among them.

12.2 Model I: perceiving, receiving, sharing, reproducing

Model I. The basic generative cycle of everyday aesthetic practice runs from a shared perception, through its reception into the perceivers, through its symbolisation and sharing, to its reproduction in the relation, which returns the perceivers to a deepened perception and turns the cycle again.

The theoretical basis of the first model is threefold and has been established in earlier parts of the paper. Its rhythm is Dewey's: the movement of doing and undergoing by which an experience is brought to fullness, taken here into the shared case, so that the perceiving and the receiving are the undergoing and the sharing and reproducing are the doing of a common aesthetic experience [12]. Its value structure is the good cycle of this series: the circuit generates a surplus around an unsettled centre and returns it to the shared attending, a positive holonomy in the register of practice [3, 45]. And its ethics is the theory of relational reproduction: the reproduction that closes the cycle must satisfy the ordered principles of that theory, generativity, co-reproduction, non-exploitation, counter-power, and the preservation of the subject, so that what is reproduced is a shared perception in which each remains a generating subject and neither is reduced to the material of the other's experience [47]. The model has, accordingly, two points of ethical exposure, and naming them is part of specifying it. The sharing carries an ethics of sharing: to share a perception is to symbolise it toward another, and the sharing is generative only if it is an invitation to perceive together rather than a display that makes the other the audience of one's own seeing, which is the aesthetic form of the epistemic hospitality this series has developed, the translation of a perception into the other's sensibility as a respect for it rather than a management of it. The reproduction carries an ethics of reproduction: the perception reproduced in the relation must leave the other room to generate, not settle into a reproduced taste imposed on them, for a reproduction that fixes the other's perception has closed the cycle it was meant to turn. The first model is the paradigm because it is the full circuit run once, with both its generative promise and its two ethical exposures in plain view.

12.3 Model II: silence, receiving, sharing, relational reproduction

Model II. A reflective variant of the cycle begins in individual silence, which is itself a reproduction of experience; its reception is the suspension of private judgement; its sharing returns the unsettled experience to the relation; and the relational reproduction completes the judgement in common rather than in the private interior.

The second model shares the skeleton of the first and differs at two moments, and its theoretical basis is what makes the difference intelligible. It begins not in active perception but in individual silence, and its first claim is that this silence is not an absence of activity but a reproduction of experience in its own right. This is the psychoanalytic contribution the paper reserved: the working-through by which an experience is reworked after the fact, and the deferred action, *Nachträglichkeit*, by which an experience receives its sense belatedly, in a later revisiting that reproduces it as something it was not at first [24]. Silence, in this model, is the interval in which this internal reproduction occurs. Its danger was marked earlier and is met here by the model's second distinctive moment. What silence reproduces may be understanding and gratitude or may be resentment and misreading, and a silence that hardened its rumination into a private verdict would sediment the bad reproduction before it ever reached the relation, which is the mechanism of the cold estrangement that this series has named among the insidious injuries of a shared life. The model's reception is the guard against this. Reception here is the suspension of private judgement, the epoché in which the perceiver holds what the silence has surfaced without ruling on its value in the private interior, and carries it, unsettled, back to the relation to be judged in common [22]. This is the aesthetic instance of the presentational justice this series developed for the non-binding vow: the individual does not sit as the sole judge of their own experience in a private court, but suspends the verdict and returns the matter to the relational system in which alone it is rightly adjudicated. The ethics of the second model is thus built into its structure rather than added to it, for the reception that suspends private judgement is the very device by which the silent reproduction is kept from going bad; the good silence and the bad are told apart by whether the silence passes through this suspension or hardens into a private verdict. And the model demonstrates something about the skeleton it shares with the first, which is that the cycle does not depend on an external aesthetic stimulus to drive it: the reworking of an experience already had, in silence, can enter and turn the same circuit, so that the generativity of the shared cycle is shown to be capable of running on the internal reproduction of experience alone.

12.4 Model III: the leaving of emptiness

Model III. Rather than producing a perception, one may construct the field in which perception generates of itself, leaving an emptiness in which the contingency of the everyday is given room to occur.

The third model is the complement of the others, and its theoretical basis is the account of the field of contingency joined to the Daoist ethics of non-possession. Where the first two models enter and turn the generative circuit, the third makes room for it, and this making of room has been prepared twice in the paper: in the diagnosis, where the everyday was shown to be the field of contingency, generative precisely because it is not arranged in advance

(§2.3), and in the design of space, where the interval, the 間, was shown to be a positive element of composition, the built form of that contingency (§10.2). To leave emptiness is to construct, in the arrangement of a shared life and its spaces, the room in which perception may generate of itself rather than being directed to a prescribed object. Its ethics is the Daoist 玄德, the dark virtue that generates without possessing, acts without presuming, and leads without commanding, 生而不有, 為而不恃, 長而不宰 [25]. The leaving of emptiness is the practical form of this virtue in everyday aesthetic life: the restraint that declines to produce the perception, that does not fill the shared field with one's own arrangement, that trusts the contingency of the ordinary and the other's generativity to bring forth what no one commanded. Its characteristic danger is the contrary of the second model's: not the hardening of a private verdict but the abdication that mistakes mere absence for generative emptiness, leaving not a field but a void. The virtue is not in the emptiness as such but in the emptiness constructed as a field, tuned like Böhme's atmosphere and composed like the interval of *ma*, so that it affords generation rather than merely withholding presence. The leaving of emptiness is the hardest of the models to do well, because it must produce, through restraint, the conditions of a generation it does not itself perform.

12.5 Model IV: iterative symbolic refinement

Model IV. Because the good of a symbolic arrangement cannot be known in advance, everyday aesthetic practice may proceed by iterated refinement: an aesthetic perception issues in a symbolic strategy, the strategy is enacted in a symbolic arrangement, the arrangement enters the relational system, the relation returns a value-feedback, and the strategy is refined for the next turn.

The fourth model is the paper's most distinctive proposal, and it exists to solve a circularity the other models leave standing. To arrange the symbols of a shared life well, a love letter, a note left in the morning, the small benevolent signs by which a home is made to generate tenderness, would seem to require that one already know what a good such arrangement is; but the good aesthetic arrangement is exactly what an aesthetic education has yet to generate, and cannot be presupposed without begging the question the whole paper is about. The fourth model dissolves this circularity by making operable not the good, which cannot be operated, but the symbolic strategy, which can. One does not produce a good sign; one enacts a symbolic strategy, returns it to the relation, receives the relation's response, and refines the strategy accordingly. The theoretical basis of this is evolutionary, and it is precise rather than metaphorical. The structure is that of an evolutionary process, variation of strategy, selection, and refinement across iterations; but it is an evolutionary process of a particular kind, one without a fitness function, because the aesthetic has no objective function that could score a strategy in advance. Here the model draws on the finding of Lehman and Stanley that in a

search whose objective cannot be well specified, and whose direct pursuit is therefore deceptive, abandoning the objective and searching instead by other signals can reach what the pursuit of the objective could not [28]. The aesthetic is such a search: the direct pursuit of beauty, the arrangement made to be beautiful, is deceptive in exactly their sense, as the photographed and displayed meal is deceived out of the beauty it grasped at. The fourth model replaces the missing fitness function not with novelty as such but with the value-feedback of the relation, which is not a scalar score but a multidimensional and generative response, and which is itself in evolution, since what counts as a good response is redefined by the relation as it develops. The good, in this model, is not presupposed and then approximated; it emerges through the co-evolution of the strategy and the relation's own criterion for it, so that the aesthetic education of a shared symbolic life is an open-ended evolution without a fixed fitness landscape. Its ethics is the ethics of the symbolic strategy, and it descends from the symbolic order's two fates (§4): the refinement is generative where the value-feedback returns to both parties and appropriative where the strategy is refined toward the management or manipulation of the other, so that the direction of refinement, toward the positive holonomy of a shared surplus or the negative holonomy of a one-sided capture, is what tells the good iteration from the bad. This model, finally, is the reason the typology is offered as open. If the good aesthetic arrangement is not presupposed but emerges through open-ended refinement, then a fixed and closed set of models would contradict the very structure the fourth model describes, and the typology must itself remain, like the practice it theorises, open to the refinement of its own strategies.

12.6 The unity of the typology

The four models compose one typology, and its unity can now be stated against the limits the survey fixed. They cover four temporalities of everyday aesthetic generation: the active generation of the first, the generation after reflective sedimentation of the second, the making of room for generation of the third, and the generation across iterated refinement of the fourth. The first, second, and fourth are the shared circuit run at the timescales of the single occasion, the reworked experience, and the evolutionary series; the third is the circuit's complement, the constructed emptiness in which it may occur. Each passes a limit the survey named: against the theory of practice, which gave everyday doing as reproduction or resistance, all four are generative, producing new aesthetic value rather than reproducing a structure or resisting one; against the methods of aesthetic education, which trained the individual in a reserved space, all four work the relation in the flow of ordinary life; against the sub-field of everyday aesthetics, which treated the everyday aesthetic as an individual's private experience, all four are relational, taking the shared generation of perception as what they cultivate; and against the practice traditions of the East, which enacted such generation within particular frameworks, all four are stated in the general terms of the paper's theory of perception and value, as the structure those traditions have long enacted. The typology is preliminary, and it is preliminary in the strong sense the fourth model requires: not a finished inventory awaiting application but an opening set, offered for the refinement that its own fourth model makes the condition of any living aesthetic practice. What the models share, beneath their differences, is the single

commitment from which the whole paper proceeds, that the unit of everyday aesthetic practice is the relation, and that to practise the aesthetics of the everyday is to turn, between two people, the generative cycle by which their shared and ordinary world is continually brought to perception.

13. The Distribution of the Sensible

The third spine holds that the distribution of perceptual capacity is uneven in ways that constitute a neglected injustice, so that aesthetic education is answerable to the theory of justice. The paper has been laying this spine's foundations throughout: in the political economy of the senses, which showed perceptual capacity to be socially produced (§5.2); in the account of value circulation, which distinguished the return of aesthetic value to its generators from its extraction (§5.4); in the line between the refinement and the commodified training of perception (§7.6); and in the production of perceptual space, which distributes the affordances of cultivation unequally (§10.5). This section gathers those foundations into the claim of justice they were preparing. It sets out Rancière's account of the distribution of the sensible, which makes perception itself the primary political stake; it proposes, as the aesthetic instance of a form of injustice this series has developed, a generative aesthetic injustice; it confronts, as the paper's principal adversary in the register of political economy, Debord's spectacle; and it closes by returning to the claim with which the paper began, that beauty and ethics share a single root, and by gathering under a single criterion the ethics that the models of practice carried severally.

13.1 Rancière and the distribution of the sensible

Rancière gave the political theory of perception its decisive formulation, and it is the frame this section requires. At the core of politics, he argued, there is an aesthetics, understood not as the annexation of politics by art but as the system of a priori forms determining what presents itself to sense experience: a distribution of the sensible that fixes, in advance of any particular political dispute, what is visible and what is not, what is audible and what goes unheard, who has a part in the common world and who is left without one [36]. The distribution of the sensible is at once a sharing, which establishes the perceptual conditions of a common world, and a partition, which divides those who are counted within it from those who are not perceived at all. Politics proper, for Rancière, occurs when those whom the reigning distribution renders imperceptible force a reconfiguration of it, demanding not merely to exist but to be perceived. This makes perception the primary stake rather than a secondary reflection of interests already formed elsewhere, and it converges exactly with the account this paper reached by another route. The distribution of the sensible is Rancière's name for the social determination of the perceptual frame that the convergence established (§8): the a priori forms that decide what can be perceived are the frame, historically produced and unequally distributed, and Rancière adds that this distribution is itself the fundamental political fact. What a person can perceive, and whether a person is perceived, is distributed, and the distribution is a matter of justice. The paper's third spine is the aesthetics of the everyday read through this recognition: if perceptual capacity is distributed, and if the everyday is where the greater part of aesthetic

life is generated, then the uneven distribution of the capacity to generate everyday aesthetic perception is a distribution of the sensible in Rancière's sense, and falls under justice as he showed perception to do.

13.2 Generative aesthetic injustice

The paper can now name the specific injustice its third spine concerns, and it does so by extending a form of injustice this series has already developed. Fricker identified epistemic injustice, the wrong done to a person specifically in their capacity as a knower, in two forms: the testimonial, in which prejudice deprives a speaker of due credibility, and the hermeneutical, in which a gap in shared interpretive resources leaves some experience unintelligible and inexpressible [17]. This series has argued for a third, generative form of epistemic injustice, the wrong of being excluded from the generation of the interpretive resources themselves. The present paper proposes the aesthetic instance of this generative injustice. There is a generative aesthetic injustice, the wrong done to a person in their capacity as a generator of aesthetic perception, when they are deprived of the cultivation by which the everyday could be generated as perceived, or excluded from the shared generation of a perceived world, or reduced to the material of another's aesthetic experience without a share in the generating. This is not the injustice of being denied access to art, though it includes that; it is the deeper wrong of having one's perceptual life left uncultivated or extracted, one's capacity to generate the aesthetic perception of one's own ordinary days stunted by the social production of perceptual incapacity, or drawn off to sustain an aesthetic consumption in which one has no part. The political economy of the senses showed this injustice to be produced rather than natural: the person bound by need to a restricted sense, the person whose attention is captured and resold, the person whose home is built to starve perception and whose senses are trained for consumption, suffers a generative aesthetic injustice that a mode of life has inflicted. And the distinction between refinement and commodified training locates its mechanism: the same plasticity that could cultivate a perception whose value returns to the perceiver is turned, under the injustice, to training a perception whose value is extracted from them. Generative aesthetic injustice is the uneven and often deliberate distribution of the capacity to generate everyday aesthetic perception, and it is the specific wrong that the third spine holds aesthetic education answerable to.

13.3 The spectacle

The paper's principal adversary in this register is the social form under which generative aesthetic injustice is now most pervasively produced, and it has a name and a theorist. Debord's spectacle is the condition in which social life, under modern conditions of production, presents itself as an immense accumulation of images, in which everything directly lived has receded into a representation, and in which the spectacle is, in his exact formulation, a social relation among people mediated by images [11]. Read through this paper's framework, the spectacle is the generalisation of the appropriative fate of the symbol (§4.3) to the whole of social perception: it is the systematic substitution of the image for the perception, the outsourcing of seeing to a

flow of representations, and the replacement of the generative encounter with the consumption of what is shown. The spectacle is thus the social engine of generative aesthetic injustice. It produces, at scale, the perceptual incapacity the third spine indicts: it habituates and numbs by supplying a perpetual stream of images that dispense with perceiving, it captures and resells the attention that everyday aesthetic life requires, and it trains perception for consumption under the guise of enriching it. Lefebvre's critique of everyday life supplies the register in which this operates, the everyday as the site where the reproduction of the relations of production is secured, and where consumer capitalism has colonised the ordinary that might otherwise have been the field of an unalienated life [27]. The everyday is contested ground: it is at once the field of contingency in which generative aesthetic perception is possible and the territory that the spectacle colonises to produce a perception fitted to consumption. This is why the aesthetics of the everyday cannot be politically innocent. To cultivate the generative perception of ordinary life is, whether or not it intends to be, a refusal of the spectacle's substitution of the image for the seeing, and the paper's models of practice are, in this light, small counter-practices to a pervasive social production of perceptual incapacity. The paper does not claim that the arrangement of a shared home or the leaving of an emptiness overturns the spectacle; it claims that the cultivation of generative everyday perception is the practice through which, at the scale of a shared life, the spectacle's colonisation of the ordinary is locally refused.

13.4 Beauty and ethics at one root

The paper returns, at its close, to the claim with which it began, that beauty and ethics share a single root, and it can now gather under one criterion the ethics its models carried severally. The fourth face of the paper's thesis held that aesthetic generation carries an ethical valence not by the later addition of a moral rule but at its root, because beauty is generated in a relation and a relation may return what it generates to all who stand in it or draw one of them off as fuel (§9.4). The whole of the argument since has borne this out. The good and the bad symbolisation, the refinement and the commodified training, the good and the bad cycle of aesthetic value, the generative and the appropriative iteration of a symbolic strategy, and now the just distribution of the sensible and its spectacular corruption: these are one distinction drawn across the registers of the paper, and the single criterion beneath them is the one this series has carried throughout. An aesthetic generation is good, in perception as in symbol as in practice as in the distribution of perceptual capacity, when its value returns to all who generate it around an unsettled centre, a positive holonomy in which no one is reduced to the material of another's aesthetic life; and it is bad when its value is extracted, its centre settled, its cycle closed, its holonomy driven to zero or below, and some are made the unattended fuel of others' aesthetic consumption. The ethics that Model I carried in its sharing and its reproduction, that Model II built into its suspension of private judgement, that Model III drew from the dark virtue that generates without possessing, and that Model IV located in the direction of its refinement, are instances of this one criterion. And the justice that this spine concerns, the just distribution of the capacity to generate everyday aesthetic perception, is the same criterion at the scale of a society: a distribution is just when the capacity to generate the aesthetic perception of one's own ordinary life is not extracted, starved, or monopolised,

but returned to all whose lives it is. Beauty and ethics are one at their root because the generation of the beautiful is a circulation of value, and the justice or injustice of a circulation, whether its surplus returns to its generators or is drawn off from them, is the ethical question as such. To cultivate the generative perception of the everyday is therefore already to take a side in a question of justice, and the aesthetic education this paper has proposed is, in the end, answerable to justice not as an external constraint upon it but as the truth of what it was all along.

14. The Ethical Limits of Aesthetic Education

A paper that has proposed an education must say where the education stops, and it must do so for reasons internal to what the education is rather than as a concession appended at the end. The cultivation of perception has limits that are not external boundaries fencing in an otherwise unlimited practice but conditions of its being the practice it is; to cross them is not to do too much of a good thing but to convert the practice into its opposite. This section states three such limits. The first is that the generativity aesthetic education cultivates cannot be made procedural without being killed. The second is that the cultivation of perception must be told apart from its disciplinary double, the training of a docile perception, and that the two share a mechanism and differ in what they produce and to whom its value returns. The third the section states not as a proposition but by instantiating it, in a return to the ordinary life from which the paper set out.

14.1 Against procedure

The first limit was implicit in the paper's method from the start and can now be made explicit. The generativity that aesthetic education cultivates is killed by being made procedural. A generation that could be produced by following a fixed procedure would not be a generation but an execution, the enactment of what was laid down in advance, and the field of contingency in which alone perception generates would have been replaced by an arrangement in which it is merely performed (§2.3). This is why the paper has declined throughout to convert its models into techniques, and why the fourth model made the openness of aesthetic practice a structural requirement rather than a modesty: if the good aesthetic arrangement is not presupposed but emerges through open-ended refinement, then any procedure claiming to produce it in advance has mistaken the closed cycle for the open one (§12.5). The models offered are therefore not procedures and cannot be made into them without ceasing to be what they are. They are descriptions of the structure of a generative practice, offered to be inhabited and refined, not steps to be followed to a guaranteed result. An aesthetic education administered as a procedure, a curriculum of perception with prescribed inputs and examinable outputs, would produce exactly the settled and appropriable perception the paper has opposed at every register, and would do so the more insidiously for calling itself an education of generativity. The limit is strict: to the precise extent that the cultivation of perception is proceduralised, it stops cultivating generativity and begins producing its counterfeit.

14.2 Cultivation and discipline

The first limit opens directly onto the second, because the proceduralised training of perception has a name and a theorist, and confronting it is how the paper draws the line between what it proposes and what it must refuse. Foucault described discipline as the production of docile bodies, a training that works on the body through exercise and repetition to produce a subject that is useful, obedient, and improved in the terms of the power that trains it, and that internalises the norm to which it is trained until surveillance need no longer be external [16]. Discipline is a cultivation of the body, and it works, as the cultivation of perception works, through the plasticity that makes the body trainable and through the repeated practice that reshapes it. The two cannot be told apart by their mechanism, for the mechanism is one: both retune a plastic perceptual and bodily capacity through sustained training. They are told apart by what they produce and to whom its value returns, which is the criterion the paper has carried throughout. Discipline produces docility: a perception trained to the norm, tuned to obey and to be useful to the power that trained it, its value extracted to that power and the subject preserved only as an instrument, the negative holonomy of a training whose surplus is drawn off from the one trained. Cultivation, in the sense this paper has given it, produces generativity: a perception trained toward its own enlargement, whose value returns to the perceiver and to the shared attending that generated it, and in which the subject is preserved as a generator rather than reduced to an instrument, the positive holonomy of a training whose surplus returns to the one trained. The distinction is exactly the one the theory of relational reproduction fixed in its principle of the preservation of the subject (§12.2), and the one the second spine drew between refinement and commodified training (§7.6). Aesthetic education stands on one side of this line, and the disciplinary training of a docile perception on the other, and because they share a mechanism the line must be drawn with care and held with vigilance, for an aesthetic education that forgot the distinction would slide, under the pressure to produce results, into the disciplinary production of a perception trained to consume, obey, and be useful, which is precisely the perception the spectacle already produces at scale (§13.3). The limit is therefore not only a caution but a criterion of self-examination: an aesthetic education must ask, of its every practice, whether it enlarges the generativity of those it cultivates and returns to them the value of their trained perception, or whether it has begun, however well-meaningly, to produce a docility whose value it extracts.

14.3 The ordinary evening

The third limit the paper states by instantiating it, since a paper on the generative perception of ordinary life should be able to return, at its close, to an ordinary evening and find there what it has been theorising. Consider, then, without further abstraction, two people at the end of a day. Neither is the teacher of the other, and neither is the other's pupil; what passes between them is not a lesson in perception but the mutual and unforced training of it, each drawing the other's attention, without design, to a quality of the light, a turn of phrase overheard, the particular way the evening has arranged itself, and each finding their own perception altered by what the other has taught them to see. They arrange their shared space not to a plan but

by the accumulated small acts of a life made together, leaving room where room is wanted and marking with a word or a kept object what has come to matter between them. They fall silent, sometimes, and let an experience settle before returning it, judged in common rather than in the solitude of either, to the shared life it belongs to. And over the long iteration of their days they refine, without ever naming it as refinement, the strategies by which they show each other tenderness, keeping what the other's response returns as generative and letting go what does not, the good of it emerging between them rather than known in advance by either. This is the whole of the paper's proposal, instantiated in an evening that asks for no theory to occur and that occurs, unnumbered, in ordinary lives. The limit it instantiates is the one the paper most needs its reader to feel rather than to be told: that the cultivation of perception this paper has theorised is not a programme to be administered but a description of what two people, turned together toward their shared and ordinary days, already do when their common life goes well, and that the office of the theory is not to produce this but to see it, to give it a name, and to defend it against the forces that would settle, extract, and proceduralise it out of existence. The theory ends where the evening begins, and hands what it has understood back to the ordinary life it was always about.

15. Directed Fissures

This paper does not conclude, and the refusal is principled rather than stylistic. A synthesis gathering the argument into a single closing proposition would settle what the argument has held open, converting the generative into the finished and enacting, in its own form, the appropriative closure the paper opposed at every register. In place of a conclusion the paper leaves directed fissures: places where what has been said runs out and points beyond itself, marked so that the pointing is legible. There are four, and each is a real incompleteness rather than a rhetorical modesty, an edge at which the argument reached the limit of what it could establish and can only indicate the direction of what it could not.

15.1 The sedimentation of shared perception

The first fissure is the widest, and the next paper must enter it. This paper showed how a shared everyday perception is generated between two people; it did not show what becomes of that perception when it accumulates. A shared perception generated and regenerated over the long iteration of a common life does not vanish at each turn. It sediments, into shared words, recurring gestures, the small rituals and understandings by which two people come to inhabit a perceptual world that is theirs and that a third could enter only by learning it. This sedimentation is the beginning of a culture, the smallest culture there is, generated in the intimacy of a shared everyday and carried beyond the moment of its generation into something inheritable. How the good repetition of shared perception sediments into a culture, how that culture is transmitted without being falsified, and how the smallest culture of two is continuous with the larger cultures of peoples and traditions, this paper has not shown. It is the subject of the paper that follows, on the emergence of culture in intimate relation, and this fissure is the seam along which the two are joined.

15.2 The perception that cannot be shared

The second fissure is a limit inside the argument rather than a passage beyond it. The paper made the symbolic order the condition of shared perception, holding that a perception must be symbolised to be held in common. But there are perceptions that resist symbolisation, that remain in the private register of the imaginary or gather around a real so singular that no symbol carries them, and these the paper's account reaches only to mark as unreachable. What becomes of the aesthetic perception that cannot be shared, whether it is simply lost to the relational life the paper cares about or whether it plays some role the paper has not seen precisely in its resistance to sharing, is a question the argument raised and could not answer. The fissure is the edge of the shareable, and the paper can point to it without crossing it.

15.3 The scale of the impersonal

The third fissure concerns scale. The paper's unit was the relation of two, and its models were models of a shared life between persons who perceive each other perceiving. But perception is cultivated and starved at scales far larger than the dyad, by institutions, cities, and economies, and the paper's account of justice gestured at these scales without developing a practice for them. What generative relational aesthetic education would be at the scale of a school, a city, or a polity, how the models of a shared life between two could be extended to the impersonal relations of many without becoming the procedures the paper forbade, is undeveloped here. The fissure is the distance between the two who share an evening and the many who share a world, and the paper crossed it only in the direction of justice, not of practice.

15.4 The perception of the last day

The fourth fissure is the one the paper is least able to close, and it opens where the everyday meets its end. The aesthetics of the everyday is an aesthetics of recurrence, of the light that returns each morning and the days that go on; its models assume the continuation of the shared life whose perception they cultivate. But shared lives end, in departure and in death, and the last ordinary day is not known to be the last while it is lived. What the generative perception of the everyday becomes under the knowledge of its ending, whether the finitude that the way of tea named in 一期一会 deepens the everyday's generation or defeats it, and how a shared aesthetic life is to hold the fact that one of its two will perceive the other for the last time on a day that will have looked ordinary, the paper has felt at its edges and not thought through. This is the fissure that no next paper closes, and the paper leaves it open in the only way it can, by turning from theory to the thing itself.

晨光落案未成书，
茶冷方知坐已虚。
不必名之为美者，
与君同看即吾庐。

Morning light falls on the desk; nothing yet is written.
The tea has gone cold, and only then do I know how long we have sat.
There is no need to give it the name of beauty.
To watch it with you is already my home.

The poem is the paper's last instantiation of its own claim, and it is offered in that spirit rather than as ornament. It symbolises a shared everyday perception without settling it, leaves the real value at its centre unnamed by declining the word *beauty*, and returns the perception, through the reader, to the ordinary mornings it came from. It is a small generative symbolisation, made and shared, of exactly the kind the paper theorised, and it enacts, in its four lines, the whole of what the argument was for: that the light on an ordinary morning, watched with the one whose shared world it is, generates between two people a value that needs no name, accumulates into a home, and asks of theory only that it be seen, named where naming serves it, and defended where it is under threat. Here the theory ends and hands what it understood back to the ordinary life it was always about.

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